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**BLAIR'S LECTURES**  
**ON**  
**RHETORIC**  
**AND**  
**BELLES-LETTERS,**  
**REDUCED TO**  
**QUESTION AND ANSWER.**

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**BY REV. JOHN MARSH.**

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**SECOND EDITION.**

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**HARTFORD, (CONN.)**  
**SAMUEL G. GOODRICH.**

.....  
**1822.**



KC 10652



*District of Connecticut, ss.*

**BE IT REMEMBERED**, That on the sixth (L. S.) day of June, in the forty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, **SAMUEL G. GOODRICH**, of the said district, hath deposited in this Office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit :

*"Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres,  
"reduced to Question and Answer. By Rev. John  
"Marsh."*

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."

**CHAS. A. INGERSOLL,**  
*Clerk of the District of Connecticut.*

A true copy of record, examined and sealed by me.

**CHAS. A. INGERSOLL,**  
*Clerk of the District of Connecticut.*

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**E. Clark, Print. Middletown.**

# BLAIR'S LECTURES

ON

## RHETORIC AND BELLES-LETTRES.



### TASTE.

**Q.** WHAT is Taste?

**A.** The power of receiving pleasure or pain from the beauties or deformities of nature and of art.

**Q.** Is it an internal sense, or an exercise of reason?

**A.** It is an internal sense; but reason assists Taste in many of its operations, and serves to enlarge its power.

**Q.** Is it common to all men?

**A.** It is, in some degree.

**Q.** How are the rudiments of Taste discoverable in children?

**A.** In their fondness for regular bodies, and in their admiration of pictures and statues.

**Q.** How, in savages of the wilderness?

**A.** In their ornaments of dress, their war and their death songs, their harangues, and their orators.

**Q.** Do all men possess the faculty of Taste, in the same degree ?

**A.** No. In some men only faint glimmerings of it are visible ; beauties of the coarsest kind only are discerned and relished by them : while, in others, taste rises to an acute discernment, and a lively enjoyment of beauties the most refined.

**Q.** To what is this inequality to be attributed ?

**A.** In part, to a difference in their natural constitution ; but chiefly, to culture and education.

**Q.** How does it appear that Taste is an improveable faculty ?

**A.** From the immense superiority of civilized over barbarous nations, in refinement of Taste ; and of those who have studied the liberal arts, over the rude and untaught, in the same nation.

**Q.** How does Taste receive its improvement ?

**A.** By frequent exercise ; and the application of good sense and reason, to the objects of Taste.

**Q.** What influence has the heart over a just Taste ?

**A.** Great. A corrupt heart can never relish the moral beauties, which are the highest, of eloquence and poetry.

**Q.** What are the characters of good Taste ?

**A.** Delicacy and correctness.

**Q.** What does Delicacy of Taste respect ?

A. The perfection of that natural sensibility on which Taste is founded.

Q. What does Correctness of Taste respect ?

A. The improvement which that faculty receives, through its connexion with the understanding.

Q. In what is the power of each chiefly seen ?

A. In discerning the true merit of a work ; and in rejecting false pretensions to merit. Delicacy, leans more to feeling ; Correctness, more to judgment. The former, is chiefly the gift of nature ; the latter, the product of culture and art.

Q. What critical writers have afforded a high example of Delicate Taste ?

A. Longinus, among the Ancients ; and Addison, among the Moderns.

Q. Who have possessed most correctness ?

A. Aristotle and Dean Swift: .

Q. Have mankind uniformly approved of the same things ?

A. No. In architecture, the Grecian models long prevailed ; then the Gothic ; afterwards, the Grecian revived. In eloquence and poetry, the Asiatics were fond of gaudy ornament ; while the Greeks admired only chaste and simple beauties. Writings, admired two or three centuries ago, have now fallen into disrepute and oblivion.

Q. What conclusion should we naturally draw from this fact ?

A. That Taste, in its operations, is fluctuating and capricious ; and has no standard.

Q. Is this actually the case ?

A. No. For there is a standard of good Taste, by appealing to which, we may distinguish between a good and a bad Taste.

Q. Upon what is Taste built ?

A. Upon sentiments and perceptions which belong to our nature.

Q. What occasions a corrupt Taste ?

A. The perversion of these sentiments and perceptions by ignorance and prejudice.

Q. What is the standard of good Taste ?

A. These sentiments and perceptions uncorrupted.

Q. Where are these to be found ?

A. They cannot fail to be developed in the course of time, and to gain ascendancy over any corrupted modes of Taste which may be introduced. Ignorance and prejudice may rule for a season, but must ultimately yield to knowledge and truth.

Q. What two works have been approved throughout ages, and become standards of poetical composition ?

A. The *Iliad* of Homer, and the *Æneid* of Virgil.

**CRITICISM—GENIUS—PLEASURES OF  
TASTE—SUBLIMITY IN OBJECTS.**

**Q. What is Criticism ?**

**A. The application of taste and good sense to the fine arts.**

**Q. What is the design of Criticism ?**

**A. To distinguish what is beautiful and faulty in every performance.**

**Q. On what is it founded ?**

**A. On experience ; on the observation of such beauties as have been found to please mankind most generally.**

**Q. What is its importance ?**

**A. Great ; for no genius is perfect, and every writer and artist may receive assistance from critical observations upon the beauties and faults of those who have gone before them.**

**Q. Are not Critics great abridgers of the native liberty of genius ?**

**A. No. For every good writer will be pleased to have his work examined by the principles of sound understanding and true taste.**

**Q. Have not some works been admired which have transgressed the rules of Critics ?**

**A. Yes. Such are the plays of Shakespeare ; which, considered as dramatic poems, are very irregular ; but they possess beauties so great as to overpower all censure.**

**Q. What is Genius ?**

A. It is that talent or aptitude which we receive from nature, for excelling in some one thing.

Q. How does it differ from Taste?

A. Taste consists, in the power of judging : Genius, in the power of executing.

Q. Which is the most limited in the sphere of its operations?

A. Genius. Many have an excellent taste in music, poetry, painting, and eloquence ; but a finished performer, in all these arts, is seldom found.

Q. What may be said of an Universal Genius?

A. That he is not likely to excel in any thing.

Q. What practical lesson may be learned from this?

A. That young persons should pursue, with ardour, that path which nature has marked out for their peculiar exertions.

Q. Who first instituted a regular inquiry into the source of the pleasures of Taste?

A. Mr. Addison, in his essay on the pleasures of the imagination.

Q. How did he arrange these pleasures?

A. Under three heads—Beauty, Grandeur, and Novelty.

Q. What have been the advances in this subject, since his time?

A. Small.

Q. To what is this owing?

A. To that thinness and subtilty which are

found to be the properties of all the feelings of Taste.

**Q.** Are the pleasures of Taste necessary for the common purposes of life ?

**A.** No : and are therefore proofs of the benevolence of the Deity, for they greatly enlarge the bounds of human happiness.\*

**Q.** In what consists a sublime emotion ?

**A.** In an admiration and expansion of the mind, attended with a degree of awfulness and solemnity, approaching to severity ; it is the opposite of the gay and brisk emotion raised by beautiful objects.

**Q.** In what does the simplest form of external grandeur appear ?

**A.** In the vast and boundless prospects presented to us by nature,—such as widely extended plains ; the firmament of heaven ; the expanse of the ocean.

**Q.** Does all vastness produce the impression of sublimity ?

**A.** Yes. Remove all bounds from any object, and you render it sublime. Hence, infinite space ; endless numbers ; and eternal duration, fill the mind with great ideas.

**Q.** What is the most copious source of sublime ideas ?

\* “ ————— Not content

“ With every food of life to nourish Man ;

“ By kind illusions of the wandering sense,

“ Thou mak'st all nature, Beauty to his eye,

“ Or Music to his ear.”

**AKENSIDE.**



**A.** The exertion of great power and force. Hence, the grandeur of earthquakes and burning mountains ; of great conflagrations ; of the stormy ocean and overflowing waters ; of tempests of wind ; of thunder and lightning ; of the war-horse ; and of battles.

**Q.** What effect have darkness, solitude, and silence ?

**A.** They tend, greatly, to assist the sublime. The firmament filled with stars, strikes the imagination with a more awful grandeur than when enlightened by the sun ; the deep sound of a bell at midnight, affects the mind more than at noon.\*

**Q.** What other things are favourable to the sublime ?

**A.** Obscurity,—as in an indistinct vision ;† and Disorder, as in a wild mass of rocks.

\* Darkness is very commonly applied for adding sublimity to all our ideas of the Deity. “ He maketh “ darkness his pavilion ; he dwelleth in the thick “ cloud.” So Milton :

————— How oft, amidst  
Thick clouds and dark, does heaven’s all-ruling Sire  
Choose to reside, his glory unobscur’d,  
And, with the majesty of darkness, round  
Circles his throne————

† We may see this fully exemplified in the following noble passage from the book of Job. “ In thoughts “ from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth “ on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which “ made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed “ before my face ; the hair of my flesh stood up : it “ stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof :

**Q.** What conveys an idea of sublimity in buildings?

**A.** Greatness of dimensions, united with greatness of manner. A Gothic Cathedral raises ideas of grandeur by its size, its height, its awful obscurity, its strength, its antiquity, and its durability.

**Q.** What other class of sublime objects is there, besides what is found in the works of nature?

**A.** That which arises from certain exertions of the human mind, from certain affections and actions of our fellow-creatures; which may be called the moral or sentimental sublime\*.

**Q.** Is high virtue essential to the moral sublime?

**A.** It increases it; but there is sublimity in the acts of the splendid conqueror, and the daring conspirator.

**Q.** What is the fundamental quality of the sublime?

**A.** Some have supposed it to be amplitude; others, terror; but mighty force or power has a better title to it.

“an image was before mine eyes; there was silence;  
“and I heard a voice—Shall mortal man be more just  
“than God?” (Job iv. 15.)

\* Porus, taken prisoner by Alexander, after a gallant defence, being asked in what manner he would be treated? answered, “Like a king.” Cæsar chided the pilot who was afraid in the storm, with “Quid times, Cæsarem vehis?”

## SUBLIMITY IN WRITING.

**Q.** What is Sublime Writing ?

**A.** Such a description of things which are, in themselves, of a sublime nature, as shall give us strong impressions of them.

**Q.** In what is the foundation of it laid ? .

**A.** In the nature of the objects described.

**Q.** What must that be ?

**A.** Elevating ; awful ; magnificent.

**Q.** How must the object be described ?

**A.** With strength ; conciseness ; and simplicity.

**Q.** Where are we to look for the most striking instances of the sublime ?

**A.** Among the most ancient authors.

**Q.** How is this to be accounted for ?

**A.** The early ages of the world and rude states of society, are favourable to sublime emotions. Cultivation is more favourable to accuracy than to sublimity.

**Q.** What writings afford us the highest instances of the sublime ?

**A.** The Sacred Scriptures.

**Q.** What descriptions in the Scriptures excel in the sublime ?

**A.** The descriptions of the Deity.\*

\* “ He stood and measured the earth : he beheld,  
 “ and drove asunder the nations ; and the everlasting  
 “ mountains were scattered ; the perpetual hills did  
 “ bow ; his ways are everlasting. The mountains  
 “ saw thee, and they trembled ; the overflowing of

Q. What passage from Moses is mentioned by Longinus, as belonging to the true sublime?

A. "God said, Let there be light : and there was light." Gen. i. 3.

Q. What heathen poet has, in all ages, been admired for sublimity?

A. Homer.

Q. To what is he indebted for much of his grandeur?

A. To his native and unaffected simplicity.

Q. What works, of more recent date, abound in the sublime?

A. The poems of Ossian.

Q. What scenes does he describe?

A. The rude scenes of nature and of society. He possesses all the plain and venerable manner of the ancient times.\*

Q. What is essential to sublime writing?

A. Conciseness, simplicity, and strength.

Q. To what is conciseness opposed?

A. To superfluous expression.

Q. To what, simplicity?

"the water passed by; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high."—*Hab.* iii. 6, 10.

\* "As autumns dark storms pour from two echoing hills, toward each other approached the heroes. As two dark streams from high rocks, meet and mix and roar on the plain; loud, rough, and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Irisfail; chief mixes his strokes with chief, and man with man. The groans of the people spread over the hills. It was like the thunder of night, when the cloud burst on Cona, and a thousand ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind." Here are images of awful sublimity.

A. To studied and profuse ornament.

Q. What does strength imply ?

A. Such a choice of circumstances in the description, as will exhibit the object in its full and most striking view.

Q. Which is most favourable to sublime poetry, rhyme or blank verse ?

A. Blank verse ; because of its boldness, freedom, and variety.

Q. By whom is the fullest proof of this afforded ?

A. By Milton, in his *Paradise Lost*.\*

Q. What are the proper sources of the sublime ?

A. Great and awful objects in nature, and magnanimous and exalted affections of the human mind.

Q. Is the sublime an emotion which can be long protracted ?

\* Take only, for an example, the following noted description of Satan, after his fall, appearing at the head of the infernal hosts :

————— He, above the rest,  
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
Stood like a tower ; his form had not yet lost  
All its original brightness, nor appear'd  
Less than archangel ruined ; and the excess  
Of glory obscur'd : as when the sun, new risen,  
Looks through the horizontal misty air,  
Shorn of his beams ; or, from behind the moon,  
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the nations, and with fear of change  
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone  
Above them all th' archangel—————

A. No. The mind cannot long be kept raised above its common tone.

Q. In what manner is the sublime exhibited to us ?

A. In sudden flashes of the imagination, which dart upon us like lightning from heaven. No writer can supply a continued run of unmixed sublime conceptions.

Q. What are we to think of magnificent words ; accumulated epithets ; and swelling expressions ?

A. That they have no relation to the true sublime.\*

Q. What is the main secret of being sublime ?

A. To say great things in few and plain words.

Q. What are the faults opposite to the sublime ?

A. The Frigid, and the Bombast.

Q. In what do these consist ?

A. The Frigid consists in degrading an object or sentiment, which is sublime in itself, by our mean conception or low description of it ; —the Bombast, in endeavouring to raise a low and trivial object into the sublime.

\* “God said, Let there be light : and there was light,” is sublime. But, “the sovereign arbiter of nature, by the potent energy of a single word, commanded the light to exist,” is bombast.

**BEAUTY.**

**Q.** What, next to sublimity, affords the highest pleasure to the imagination ?

**A.** Beauty.

**Q.** How is the emotion which it raises, distinguished from that of sublimity ?

**A.** It is of a calmer kind ; more gentle and soothing ; extends to a greater variety of objects ; and admits of longer duration.

**Q.** What affords the simplest instance of beauty ?

**A.** Colour.

**Q.** What colours are generally chosen for beauty ?

**A.** Delicate rather than glaring ; such as the feathers of birds, the leaves of flowers, the fine variation of colours shown by the sky at the rising and setting of the sun.

**Q.** What forms of beauty does Figure open to us ?

**A.** Such as are more complex and diversified.

**Q.** What is first to be noticed in figure, as a source of beauty ?

**A.** Regularity.

**Q.** Why does this appear beautiful to us ?

**A.** On account of its suggesting the ideas of fitness, propriety, and use ; as, in cabinets, doors, windows, houses.

**Q.** If utility does not require it, is regularity most beautiful in figure ?

**A.** No. Figures bounded by curve lines are,

in general, more beautiful than those bounded by straight lines and angles.

Q. On what two lines does the beauty of figure principally depend ?

A. The waving line, or a curve bending backwards and forwards, as the letter S ; and the waving curve twisted round some solid body, as twisted pillars and twisted horns.

Q. What affords another source of beauty, distinct from figure ?

A. Motion.

Q. What kind of Motion belongs to the beautiful ?

A. The gentle only ; as the motion of a bird gliding through the air, or of a smooth running stream.

Q. In what direction should it be, to be most beautiful ?

A. In a waving, undulating direction, rather than in a straight line ; and upwards, rather than downwards, as in the easy curling motion of smoke.

Q. What difference is observable between those movements which are necessary, and those which are designed to please ?

A. 'The former' are in straight or plain lines ; the latter, in waving.

Q. If Colour, Figure, and Motion all meet in one object, what is the effect ?

A. It renders the beauty greater and more complex.

Q. Where is the most complete assemblage of beautiful objects to be found ?



**A.** In a rich natural landscape, where are fields in verdure, scattered trees and flowers, and animals grazing.

**Q.** What is the beauty of the human countenance?

**A.** Very complex ;—comprehending the beauty of colour, and the beauty of figure.

**Q.** Upon what does the principal beauty of the human countenance depend?

**A.** Upon a mysterious expression which it conveys of the qualities of the mind ; of good sense or good humour ; of candour ; benevolence ; sensibility, or other amiable dispositions.

**Q.** What qualities of the mind raise in us a feeling similar to that of beauty?

**A.** Compassion, mildness, friendship, and generosity.

**Q.** What may this be called?

**A.** Moral beauty ; as the exercise of heroism, magnanimity, contempt of death, was called moral sublimity.

**Q.** What holds so high a rank among our perceptions as to regulate our other ideas of beauty?

**A.** Our sense of fitness and design. If there is propriety in all the parts of a building, there is beauty ; if there is a want of it, there is deformity.\*

**Q.** What is beautiful writing?

**A.** That which is neither remarkably sub-

\* Twisted columns are ornamental ; but if they are used to support a part of a building that is massy, they displease us, for there is an appearance of weakness.

lime, passionate, nor sparkling ; but such as raises in the reader an emotion of the gentle, placid kind, similar to what is raised by the contemplation of beautiful objects in nature.

Q. Who have furnished us with specimens of this ?

A. Addison, Fenelon, Virgil, and Cicero.

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### OTHER PLEASURES OF TASTE.

Q. What else delights the imagination besides sublimity and beauty ?

A. Novelty and Imitation.

Q. What is the character of the emotion raised by Novelty ?

A. It is of a more lively and awakening nature than that produced by beauty, but much shorter in its duration.

Q. What passion does it gratify ?

A. Curiosity.

Q. To what does Imitation give rise ?

A. To the secondary pleasures of the Imagination, which form a very extensive class ; for all imitation affords some pleasure.

Q. Do not the pleasures of Melody and Harmony also belong to Taste ?

A. Yes. Every agreeable sensation we receive from Beauty or Sublimity, may be heightened by the power of musical sound. Wit ; Humour ; and Ridicule, also, open a variety of pleasures to Taste.

**Q.** To what class of all these pleasures of Taste is that to be referred, which we receive from poetry, eloquence, or fine writing?

**A.** Not to any one, but to them all.

**Q.** Whence do Eloquence and Poetry derive this power of supplying Taste and Imagination with such a wide circuit of pleasures?

**A.** From their great capacity of Imitation and Description.

**Q.** Has Discourse been considered as the chief of all the imitative arts?

**A.** Yes. It has been compared with painting and with sculpture; and, in many respects, justly preferred before them.

**Q.** Is there any difference between Imitation and Description?

**A.** There is considerable. Imitation is performed by means of some things which have a natural likeness to the thing imitated; such as statues and pictures. Description is the raising in the mind the conception of an object by means of some arbitrary symbols; such as words and writing.

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## RISE AND PROGRESS OF LANGUAGE.

**Q.** What is Language?

**A.** It is the expression of our ideas by certain articulate sounds, which are used as the signs of those ideas.

**Q.** What is the present state of language ?

**A.** Very perfect. It is even made an instrument of the most refined luxury.

**Q.** How may we well contemplate it ?

**A.** With the highest astonishment ; but, like the expanse of the firmament, it has become familiar, and we behold it without wonder.

**Q.** How may we form the best idea of its origin ?

**A.** By contemplating the circumstances of mankind in their earliest and rudest state.

**Q.** In what condition were they ?

**A.** They were a wandering, scattered race ; had no society among them except families ; and this society very imperfect.

**Q.** In this situation, could they easily form language ?

**A.** No. Great difficulties must have arisen ; so that there is no small reason for referring language to divine inspiration.

**Q.** Suppose a period before any words were known, how would men communicate to others what they felt ?

**A.** By cries of passion, accompanied with expressive motions and gestures.

**Q.** What then are we to suppose were among the first elements of speech ?

**A.** Interjections.

**Q.** How can we suppose men to have proceeded in the formation of words ?

**A.** By imitating the nature of the object named. Wind would be said to whistle and

roar ; a serpent, to hiss ; a fly, to buzz ; falling timber, to crash ; hail, to rattle.

Q. From the paucity of words, how would the earliest language be pronounced ?

A. With more gesticulation, and with more and greater inflexions of voice than we now use.

Q. Was this musical and gesticulating system, which belongs to the savage state, retained in the Greek and Roman languages ?

A. Yes ; to a very high degree. Aristotle considers the music of Tragedy, as one of its chief and most essential parts.

Q. Was the case parallel with regard to gestures ?

A. Yes. In the reign of Augustus, the favourite entertainment of the public was pantomime ; which was carried on entirely by mute gesticulation.

Q. What put an end to this ?

A. The incursions of the Barbarians, who paid no regard to the pomp of declamation or theatrical action.

Q. What modern people retain, to a great degree, the musical system ?

A. The Chinese. They vary each word by five different tones ; thus making it signify five different things, which gives an appearance of singing to their speech.

Q. Whence is formed the Prosody of language ?

A. From the reduction of the original inflexions of voice to smooth and musical sounds.

Q. What was the original style of language ?

A. Exceedingly figurative.

Q. Have we any striking instance of this ?

A. Yes. In the style of the American Indians,\* and of the Old Testament.

Q. How came language, at an early period, to be extremely metaphorical ?

A. The want of proper names for every object, obliged men to use one name for many ; but few words also, were invented for expressing moral and intellectual ideas.†

Q. Which was the earliest language, Poetry or Prose ?

A. Poetry.

Q. What was the effect of improvement in language ?

A. The destruction of the figurative style, and introduction of one more precise and simple.

Q. Who was the earliest Greek Prose writer ?

\* “ We are happy in having buried under ground  
“ the red axe, that has so often been dyed with the  
“ blood of our brethren. Now, in this fort, we inter  
“ the axe, and plant the tree of peace. We plant a  
“ tree, whose top will reach the sun, and its branches  
“ spread abroad, so that it shall be seen afar off. May  
“ its growth never be stifled and choaked ; but may it  
“ shade both your country and ours with its leaves !”  
—*Treaty of the Five Nations.*

† In the Old Testament, iniquity is expressed by a spotted garment ; misery, by drinking the cup of astonishment ; vain pursuits, by feeding on ashes ; a sinful life, by a crooked path ; prosperity, by the candle of the Lord shining on our head.

A. Pherecydes of Scyros, the master of Pythagoras.

Q. What difference is there between the ancient and modern tongues, in the order in which words are arranged in a sentence ?

A. The ancients placed first in a sentence, that word which expressed the principal object of discourse ; and afterwards the person or the thing that acted upon it. The moderns place first the person who speaks or acts ; next, the action ; and lastly, the object of the action.

Q. How are we to account for this ?

A. In the early period of language, men would labour to make themselves understood, by pointing at the object desired, and expressly naming it, before the action to be done. In asking for fruit, it would be natural to say ; " Fruit give me."

Q. Which arrangement is to be preferred ?

A. The Latin order is more animated ; but the English is more clear and distinct, and answers better, therefore, the great end of speech.

Q. How may the present state of language be compared with the ancient ?

A. It is more correct and accurate ; but less striking and animated : less favourable to poetry and oratory ; but more to reason and philosophy.

## RISE AND PROGRESS OF WRITING.

**Q.** What may be said of Writing?

**A.** That, next to speech, it is the most useful art of which men are possessed.

**Q.** How many sorts of written characters are there?

**A.** Two. Signs for things; as pictures, hieroglyphics, and symbols: and signs for words; as the alphabetical characters.

**Q.** What was the first essay towards writing?

**A.** The formation of Pictures.

**Q.** Were these perfect records?

**A.** No. They could delineate external events, but could convey no idea of the dispositions or words of men.

**Q.** What arose, in process of time, to supply this defect?

**A.** Hieroglyphical Characters.

**Q.** How did these differ from Pictures?

**A.** Pictures delineated the resemblance of external visible objects. Hieroglyphics painted invisible objects by analogies taken from the invisible world, Ingratitude was denoted by a viper; imprudence, by a fly; wisdom, by an ant; victory, by a hawk; a dutiful child, by a stork.\*

\* Among the Mexicans, were found some traces of hieroglyphical characters, intermixed with their historical pictures. But Egypt was the country where this sort of writing was most studied, and brought into a



**Q.** What succeeded these ?

**A.** Among some nations, as the Peruvians, small cords, with knots, as signs of their ideas ; among others, as the Chinese, simple marks and characters.

**Q.** Have not the Chinese an Alphabet ?

**A.** No. They have a character for every thing or object.

**Q.** Must not these characters be immensely numerous ?

**A.** Yes. Above seventy thousand. To read and write them perfectly, is the study of a life.

**Q.** Have we any thing of this kind ?

**A.** Yes. Our arithmetical figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, each of which represents a distinct object ; and can be understood by Italians, Spaniards, and French, though they know not our language.

**Q.** Who invented Letters ?

**A.** It is unknown. Plato attributes the invention to Theuth, an Egyptian.

**Q.** How did they pass into Europe ?

**A.** Through Moses, who carried them into Canaan ; where they were learned by Cadmus the Phœnician, who carried them into Greece.

**Q.** How many letters did the Alphabet of Cadmus contain ?

**A.** Sixteen.

**Q.** Can all Alphabets be traced to this ?

**A.** Yes.

regular art. In hieroglyphics was conveyed all the boasted wisdom of their priests.

**Q.** How were letters originally written ?

**A.** From the right hand towards the left.

**Q.** What did writing, for a long time, continue to be ?

**A.** A kind of engraving, on pillars and temples of stone, and plates of lead.

**Q.** When was paper invented ?

**A.** In the fourteenth century.

**Q.** On what were books written previous to this ?

**A.** On the leaves and bark of certain trees ; and on the skins of animals, polished into parchment.

**Q.** What are the comparative advantages of Writing and Speech ?

**A.** Writing is a more permanent and extensive method of communication ; but speech has a great superiority in point of energy and force : for tones, looks, and gestures are natural interpreters of the sentiments of the human mind.

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## STRUCTURE OF LANGUAGE.

**Q.** Are the essential parts of speech the same in all languages ?

**A.** Yes. There must always be some words to denote the names of objects, their qualities, and what we affirm of them.

**Q.** What is the most simple and comprehensive division of the parts of speech ?

**A.** Into substantives, attributives, and connectives.

**Q.** What are substantives ?

**A.** Words which express the names of objects.

**Q.** What are attributives ?

**A.** Words which express any attribute, property, or action of substantives.

**Q.** What are connectives ?

**A.** Words expressive of the connexions, relations, and dependencies which take place among them.

**Q.** How were substantives formed ?

**A.** In the most general manner, expressive of a very extensive genus or species of objects ; as tree, man, house, river.

**Q.** What method was devised for specifying the individual object intended ?

**A.** The introduction of the Article.

**Q.** Have all languages the Article ?

**A.** No. The Latin has none ; the Greek has but one, the definite ; but the English has two, **A**, and **THE**—the indefinite and definite.

**Q.** How did the Latins supply the place of the Article ?

**A.** By the introduction of pronouns ; which, however, was a defect in their language, as Articles contribute much to clearness and precision.

**Q.** What affections belong to substantives ?

**A.** Number, gender, and case.

**Q.** How does number distinguish them ?

**A.** As one or many of the same kind, call-

ed Singular and Plural ; and is found in all languages.

**Q.** What is gender ?

**A.** The distinction of sex ; and is either Masculine or Feminine. Most things not thus naturally distinguished, are said to be of the Neuter Gender ; though, in most languages, men have ranked a great number of inanimate objects under the distinctions of Masculine and Feminine.

**Q.** What is Case ?

**A.** A variation in the termination of nouns, to express the relations which objects bear to one another.

**Q.** Do all languages agree in the use of Cases ?

**A.** The Greek and Latin use them ; but the English, French and Italian do not ; or, at most, use them very imperfectly.

**Q.** In place of the variations of cases, how do these modern tongues express the relations of objects ?

**A.** By Prepositions, prefixed to the name of the object.

**Q.** What are Pronouns ?

**A.** They are Representatives or Substitutes of Nouns.

**Q.** Were these of early invention ?

**A.** Probably not. Their places were supplied by pointing at the object when present, and naming it when absent.

**Q.** What are Adjectives ?

**A.** Terms of quality ; they are found in all

languages, and are the simplest of all that class of words which are termed attributive.

Q. Which is the most complex of all the parts of speech ?

A. The Verb.

Q. How many things are at once implied in the use of the Verb ?

A. Three ; the attribute of some substantive ; an affirmation concerning that attribute ; and time.

Q. How early were Verbs formed ?

A. They must have been coeval with men's first attempts towards the formation of language ; for no perfect sentence can be formed without a Verb expressed or implied.

Q. What was probably the radical Verb, or the first form of it ?

A. The Impersonal Verb ; as " it rains ; " " it thunders."

Q. What do the tenses of Verbs imply ? .

A. The several distinctions of Time.

Q. What are the three great divisions of Time ?

A. The past, the present, and the future.

Q. Are these Tenses subdivided ?

A. The first and last are, in order to represent things past, as more or less distant ; and things future as more or less remote, by different gradations.

Q. What other distinction, besides Tense, do Verbs admit of ?

A. The distinction of voices, the Active and Passive, as " I love," or " I am loved ; "

and of moods, which are intended to express the perceptions and volitions of the mind under different forms.

Q. What language is most regular and complete in the Tenses and Moods ?

A. The Greek ; the most perfect of all the known tongues.

Q. What are auxiliary Verbs ?

A. Words, like prepositions, of a general and abstract nature, implying different modifications of simple existence, without reference to any particular thing.

Q. Of what have they taken the place ?

A. Of varieties in the termination of the Latin verb. They render language more simple and easy, but more prolix and less graceful.

Q. What is an Adverb ?

A. An abridged mode of speech, expressing by one word, what might be resolved into two or more words, belonging to the other parts of speech.

Q. What is the use of Conjunctions ?

A. Conjunctions connect sentences or members of sentences.

Q. What is the use of Prepositions ?

A. They show the relation which one substantive noun bears to another.

Q. Are these connective particles of great importance ?

A. Yes. As they point out the relations <sup>sb</sup>and transitions by which the mind passes from <sup>to</sup>one <sup>to</sup>another.

idea to another, they are the foundation of all reasoning.

Q. What language most abounds in them ?

A. The Greek, in consequence of the acute and subtile genius of that refined people.

Q. Is the language at present spoken throughout Great Britain, the original speech of the Island ?

A. No ; nor is it derived from it.

Q. What was the original language ?

A. The Celtic or Gaelic.

Q. By whom was this expelled ?

A. By the Saxons, who conquered the Britons and drove them into the mountains of Wales, A. D. 450.

Q. What was the Saxon language ?

A. A dialect of the Gothic or Teutonic.

Q. Was this the present English ?

A. Not purely. William the Conqueror afterwards introduced the Norman or French, which became united with the Saxon, and formed the English Tongue.

Q. What has been the effect of this union ?

A. Irregular construction : imperfect declension ; and narrow syntax.

Q. Is the English language copious ?

A. Yes. Few languages are more so.

Q. For what is it most distinguished ?

A. For its strength and energy, and its adaptedness to the higher subjects of composition.

Q. In what does it excel the French ?

A. In the language of poetry.

Q. In what does the French language surpass the English ?

A. In expressing the nicer shades of character. It is the happiest language for conversation in the world.

Q. What effect does national character have upon language ?

A. Great. The gaiety of the French and the gravity of the English are clearly visible in their respective Tongues.

Q. On what depends the flexibility of a language, or its power of accommodation to different styles and manners ?

A. On its copiousness ; the different arrangements of which its words are susceptible ; and the variety and beauty of the sound of those words.

Q. What language possesses this quality in the highest degree ?

A. The Greek.

Q. What is the flexibility of the English ?

A. Inferior to the Italian, but highly reputable.

Q. In what has it been thought most defective ?

A. In harmony of sound.

Q. Is it so to an extreme ?

A. No. Our verse is, after the Italian, the most diversified and harmonious of any of the modern dialects ; it far exceeds the French verse in variety, sweetness, and melody.

Q. How does the English compare with the other European dialects ?



### 34     *Style, Perspicuity, and Precision.*

A. It is, in its form and construction, the most simple of all ; being free from all intricacy of cases, declensions, moods, and tenses.

Q. Does it require a high degree of our study and attention ?

A. Yes ; or we can never write it with propriety, purity, and elegance.



### STYLE, PERSPICUITY, AND PRECISION.

Q. What is Style ?

A. The peculiar manner in which a man expresses his thoughts by language.

Q. Under what may the qualities of a good style be arranged ?

A. Under Perspicuity and Ornament.

Q. What is the fundamental quality of a good style ?

A. Perspicuity.

Q. What does Perspicuity, with respect to words and phrases, require ?

A. Purity, Propriety, and Precision.

Q. What is Purity ?

A. The use of such words and constructions as belong to the idiom of a particular language, in opposition to words and phrases that are imported from other languages, or that are obsolete or new coined.

Q. What is Propriety ?

A. The selection of such words as the best

and most established usage has appropriated to those ideas which we intend to express.

Q. What is Precision ?

A. Retrenching all superfluities, and pruning the expression so as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of our idea.

Q. What is a Loose Style ?

A. One in which it is difficult to ascertain the precise meaning of the writer.

Q. What is the chief source of a Loose Style ?

A. The injudicious use of Synonymous words ; such as Austerity and Rigour, Custom and Habit, Pride and Vanity, Only and Alone, Entire and Complete, With and By, which agree in expressing one principal idea, but always with some diversity in the circumstances.\*

Q. To write or speak with precision, what is requisite ?

A. Clear and distinct ideas ; and an exact

\* Austerity relates to the manner of living ; rigour, of punishing. Custom respects the action ; habit, the actor. Pride makes us esteem ourselves ; vanity makes us desire the esteem of others. Only imports that there is no other of the same kind ; alone imports being accompanied by no other ; an only child is one who has neither brother nor sister ; a child alone is one who is left by itself. A thing is entire by wanting none of its parts ; complete, by wanting none of the appendages belonging to it. We kill a man with a sword ; he dies by violence. The criminal is bound with ropes, by the executioner.

and full comprehension of the force of those words we employ.

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## STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES.

**Q.** What are the properties most essential to a perfect sentence ?

**A.** Clearness ; Unity ; Strength ; and Harmony.

**Q.** From what does Ambiguity, the opposite of Clearness, arise ?

**A.** Either from a wrong choice of words, or a wrong collocation of them.

**Q.** In the arrangement of sentences, what capital rule should be observed ?

**A.** Place the words or members, most nearly related, as near to each other as possible ; so as to make their mutual relation clearly appear.

**Q.** What attention should be paid to adverbs, and the relatives who, which, and what ?

**A.** Great ; as, by their position, is often determined the meaning of a sentence.

**Q.** What is the first rule to be observed for preserving the unity of a sentence ?

**A.** Change the scene, during the course of the sentence, as little as possible. Hurry not, by sudden transitions, from person to person, nor from subject to subject.

**Q.** What is the second ?

A. Never crowd into a sentence things which have so little connexion, that they can be divided into two or three sentences.

Q. What is the third rule?

A. Keep clear of all parentheses in the middle of a sentence.

Q. What is the last?

A. Always bring the sentence to a full and perfect close.

Q. In what consists the strength of a sentence?

A. In such a disposition of the several words and members, as shall bring out the sense to the best advantage, and give every word and member due force.

Q. What is the first rule for promoting the strength of a sentence?

A. Prune it of all redundant words and members.\*

Q. What is the second?

A. Attend particularly to the use of copulatives, relatives, and all the particles employed for transition and connexion ;—as *but, and, which, when, where, &c.*

Q. What is the third?

A. Place the capital word or words in that part of the sentence where they will make the fullest impression.

Q. What is the fourth?

\* "Concise your diction, let your sense be clear,  
Nor with a weight of words, fatigue the ear."

HORACE.

**A.** Make the members of the sentence go on rising in their importance one above another.

**Q.** What is the fifth ?

**A.** Avoid concluding the sentence with an adverb, a preposition, or any inconsiderable word.

**Q.** What is the sum of all rules for the construction of sentences ?

**A.** Communicate, in the clearest and most natural order, the ideas which you mean to transfuse into the minds of others.

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## HARMONY OF SENTENCES.

**Q.** What is the harmony of a period ?

**A.** Its agreeableness to the ear.

**Q.** What things are to be considered in the harmony of Periods ?

**A.** First, agreeable sound, without any particular expression. Next, the sound so ordered, as to become expressive of the sense. The first is the more common ; the second, the higher kind of beauty.

**Q.** On what does agreeable sound, in prose, depend ?

**A.** On the choice of words, and on their arrangement.

**Q.** What attention did the ancients pay to the music of sentences ?

**A. Great.** Often an orator would be publicly applauded for the perfection of his periods.

**Q.** What attention has it received among the Moderns ?

**A.** But little. Their taste is different, and their language is not so susceptible of the graces and powers of melody ; yet it should not be wholly neglected.\*

**Q.** On what does the music of a sentence chiefly depend ?

**A.** On the proper distribution of its several members, and on the close or cadence of the whole.

**Q.** How many degrees of sound are there adapted to the sense ?

**A.** Two. First, the current of sound, adapted to the tenour of a discourse ; next, a particular resemblance between some object, and the sounds that are employed in describing it.†

\* The following is a very harmonious sentence from Milton : " We shall conduct you to a hill-side, laborious indeed at the first ascent ; but else, so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds, on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming."

† The contrast between the opening of the gates of hell and heaven, in *Paradise Lost*, displays to great advantage the poet's art :——

———" On a sudden, open fly,  
With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound,  
Th' infernal doors ; and, on their hinges, grate.  
Harsh thunder."——

**Q.** How many classes of objects may the sounds of words represent ?

**A.** Three. Other sounds, as the noise of waters and roaring of winds ;—motion ; and the emotions and passions of the mind.



## ORIGIN AND NATURE OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

**Q.** What is figurative language ?

**A.** Language prompted either by the imagination or the passions.

**Q.** Are figures the mere product of study ?

**A.** No. The most illiterate speak in figures as often as the most learned.

**Q.** Why have rhetoricians devoted much attention to them ?

**A.** Because, in them consists much of the beauty and force of language.

**Q.** Into how many classes are Figures divided ?

**A.** Two. Figures of Words, and Figures of Thought.

**Q.** What are Figures of Words called ?

**A.** Tropes.

—————“ Heaven open'd wide  
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,  
On golden hinges turning.”—————

**Q.** In what do these consist ?

**A.** In words being employed to signify something different from their original meaning. Thus, "Light ariseth to the upright in darkness." Here light and darkness are put for comfort and adversity.

**Q.** In what do Figures of Thought consist ?

**A.** In the turn of the Thought ;—the words used retaining their proper and literal meaning, as in exclamations, apostrophes, and comparisons.

**Q.** What is the origin of Figures of Speech ?

**A.** The barrenness of Language, but chiefly the influence which imagination possesses over our speech.

**Q.** What is the use of Tropes or Figures ?

**A.** They enrich language ; bestow dignity and grace upon style ; \* give us the enjoyment of two objects presented together without confusion ; and furnish a much more striking view of the

\* To say, that 'the sun rises,' is trite and common ; but it becomes a magnificent image when expressed as Mr. Thomson has done :

"But yonder comes the powerful king of day,  
Rejoicing in the east."——

To say, that 'all men are subject alike to death,' presents only a vulgar idea ; but it rises and fills the imagination, when painted thus by Horace :

"Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede, pauperum  
tabernas Regumque tures."

"With equal pace, impartial fate,  
Knocks at the palace, as the cottage gate."



principal object than we could have if it were expressed in simple terms.

**Q.** To what Tropes is given the name of Metonymy ?

**A.** To those founded on the several relations of cause and effect, container and contained, sign and thing signified : as when the shade is used for the tree ; the cup, for the liquor ; the sceptre, for authority.

**Q.** What is a Metalepsis ?

**A.** A Trope founded on the relation of antecedent and consequent ; as in the Roman phrase of “ Fuit,” or “ Vixit,” expressing that one is dead.

**Q.** What is a Synecdoche ?

**A.** When the whole is put for a part, or a part for the whole ; a genus for a species, or a species for a genus ; as, sail for ships ; waves for the sea.



## METAPHOR.

**Q.** On what is Metaphor founded ?

**A.** On the resemblance which one object bears to another. It is a comparison in an abridged form. “ A Minister upholds the state, like a pillar ;” is a comparison. “ A Minister is the Pillar of the state ;” is a metaphor.

**Q.** Does this figure come near to Painting ?

**A.** Yes. Its peculiar effect is to make intel-

lectual ideas visible to the eye, by giving them colour, substance, and sensible qualities.

Q. What is the first rule to be observed in the conduct of Metaphors ?

A. They should be suited to the nature of the subject of which we treat ; neither too many, nor too gay, nor too elevated for it.\*

Q. What is the second rule ?

A. Beware of such allusions as raise in the mind disagreeable, mean, vulgar ideas.

Q. What is the third rule ?

A. The resemblance which is the foundation of the Metaphor, should be clear and perspicuous ; not far-fetched, nor difficult of discovery.

Q. What is the fourth ?

A. Never mix metaphorical and plain language together ; never construct a period so that part of it must be understood metaphorically, and part, literally.

Q. What is the fifth ?

A. Never make two Metaphors meet on one object ; as, " to take arms against a sea of trouble."

Q. What is the sixth ?

A. Avoid crowding Metaphors together on the same subject.

\* This rule should be particularly attended to by young writers, who are apt to be carried away by an admiration of what is showy and florid, whether in its place or not. A great secret in composition is to know when to be simple.

Q. What is the last ?

A. Do not let them be carried too far.

Q. What is a good rule for examining the propriety of Metaphors ?

A. Form a picture of them, and see what figure they present when delineated with a pencil.\*

Q. What is an Allegory ?

A. A continued Metaphor.†

\* ————— “ As glorious  
As is a winged messenger from heaven,  
Unto the white upturned wondering eyes  
Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,  
When he bestrides the lazy pacing clouds,  
And sails upon the bosom of the air.”

Here the angel is represented, as, at one moment, *bestriding* the clouds, and *sailing* upon the air, and upon the *bosom* of the air too ; which forms such a confused picture, that it is impossible for any imagination to comprehend it.

“ I bridle in my struggling muse with pain,  
That longs to launch into a bolder strain !”

The muse, figured as a horse may be *bridled* ; but when we speak of *launching*, we make it a ship ; and, by no force of imagination, can it be supposed both a horse and a ship at one moment ; *bridled*, to hinder it from *launching*.

† Thus, in Prior's Henry and Emma : Emma, in the following allegorical manner, describes her constancy to Henry :

“ Did I but purpose to embark with thee  
On the smooth surface of a summer's sea,  
While gentle zephyrs play with prosperous gales,  
And fortune's favour fills the swelling sails ;

**Q.** What rules are to be observed in the conduct of Allegories ?

**A.** The same as were given for Metaphors, on account of the affinity they bear to each other.

**Q.** Were the Ancients fond of delivering instruction by Allegories ?

**A.** Yes. Their Fables or Parables, are no other than Allegories.

**Q.** What is an *Ænigma* or Riddle ?

**A.** One thing represented by another ; but purposely wrapt up under so many circumstances, as to be rendered obscure.



## HYPERBOLE—PERSONIFICATION— APOSTROPHE.

**Q.** In what does Hyperbole consist ?

**A.** In magnifying an object beyond its natural bounds.

**Q.** How many kinds of Hyperboles are there ?

**A.** Two ; such as are employed in description, and such as are suggested by the warmth of passion.

**Q.** Which are the best ?

**A.** The latter, by far ; for passion excuses

But would forsake the ship and make the shore,  
When the winds whistle, and the tempests roar ?”

daring figures, and often renders them natural and just.\*

Q. What must govern the use of this figure ?

A. Good sense and just taste.†

Q. What writers most abuse this Figure ?

A. The Epigrammatic. They often rest the whole merit of their epigrams on some extravagant hyperbolical turn.

Q. What is Personification ?

A. That figure by which we attribute life and action to inanimate objects.

Q. Is there a strong tendency in the human mind to the use of this figure ?

A. Yes ; and it is probably one of the sources of Pagan Theology.

Q. How many different degrees of this figure are there ?

A. Three. The first and lowest is, when

\* The following sentiments of Satan, in Milton, powerfully exhibit the picture of a mind agitated with rage and despair :

“ Me, miserable ! which way shall I fly  
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair ?  
Which way I fly is hell, myself am hell,  
And in the lowest depth a lower deep,  
Still threat’ning to devour me, opens wide,  
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.”

† The following picture is disgusting :

———“ I found her on the floor  
In all the storm of grief, yet beautiful ;  
Pouring forth tears at such a lavish rate,  
That were the world on fire, they might have drown’d  
The wrath of Heaven, and quench’d the mighty ruin.”

LEE.

some of the properties of living creatures are ascribed to inanimate objects ; as, a raging storm, a deceitful disease : . The second, when those inanimate objects are introduced as acting like such as have life : \* The third, when they are represented as speaking to us, or as listening to what we say to them. †

Q. In the management of this last, (which is the highest sort of personification,) what rules are to be observed ?

A. Never attempt nor continue it, unless prompted by strong passion ; and never

\* No personification, in any author, is more striking, or introduced on a more proper occasion, than the following of Milton's, on Eve's eating the forbidden fruit :

“ So saying, her rash hand, in evil hour,  
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she ate ;  
Earth felt the wound : and nature from her seat,  
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of wo,  
That all was lost.”——

† “ Oh ! unexpected stroke, worse than of death !  
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise ! thus leave  
Thee, native soil, these happy walks, and shades,  
Fit haunt of gods ! where I had hop'd to spend  
Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day,  
Which must be mortal to us both. O flowers !  
That never will in other climate grow,  
My early visitation and my last  
At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand,  
From your first op'ning buds, and gave you names !  
Who now shall rear you to the sun, or rank  
Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount ?”

personify any object, in this way, but such as has some dignity in itself.\*

Q. What is the *Apostrophe*?

A. An address to a real person who is either absent or dead, as if he were present, or listening to us.

Q. Where does this figure most abound?

A. In the poems of *Ossian*, and in the writings of the *Prophets*.†

\* Addressing the several parts of one's body as if they were animated, is not congruous to the dignity of passion. For this reason, the following passage, in a very beautiful poem of Mr. Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*, must be condemned.

"Dear fatal name! rest ever unreveal'd,  
Nor pass these lips in holy silence seal'd.  
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,  
Where mix'd with God's, his lov'd idea lies;  
Oh! write it not, my hand!—his name appears  
Already written:—Blot it out, my tears!"

† "Weep on the rocks of roaring winds, O maid of Inistore! Bend thy fair head over the waves thou fairer than the ghosts of the hills when it moves in a sunbeam at noon over the silence of Morven! He is fallen! Thy youth is low; pale beneath the sword of Cuthullin!" *Ossian*.

"O thou sword of the Lord! how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put thyself up into the scabbard, rest and be still! How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea-shore? There he hath appointed it."—*Jer.* xlvii. 6, 7.

## COMPARISON,\* AND OTHER FIGURES OF SPEECH.

**Q.** What is a Comparison?

**A.** A resemblance between two objects expressed in form, and pursued more fully than the nature of a metaphor admits.\*

**Q.** Does this figure afford much pleasure?

**A.** Yes. A happy Comparison is a sparkling ornament, adding lustre and beauty to discourse.

**Q.** To what two classes may all Comparisons be reduced?

**A.** To explaining and embellishing.

**Q.** What is the fundamental requisite of a Comparison?

**A.** That it serves to illustrate the object for the sake of which it is introduced; and to give us a stronger conception of it.

**Q.** What demands attention in Comparisons?

**A.** The propriety of their introduction, and the nature of the objects whence they are taken.†

\* As "the actions of princes are like those great rivers, the course of which every one beholds, but their springs have been seen by few"

† The following is a studied and affected comparison of Portius, when Lucius had bid him farewell, in Addison's Cato :

"Thus o'er the dying lamp, th' unsteady flame,  
Hangs quiv'ring on a point, leaps off by fits,



**Q.** What is the first rule relating to the objects whence comparisons should be drawn ?

**A.** They must not be drawn from things which have too near and obvious a resemblance to the object with which we compare them.\*

**Q.** What is the second ?

**A.** They should not be founded on likenesses too faint and remote.

**Q.** What is the third ?

**A.** The object from which a comparison is drawn should never be an unknown object, or one of which few people can form clear ideas.

**Q.** What is the fourth ?

**A.** In compositions of a serious or elevated kind, similes should never be taken from low or mean objects.

**Q.** What is an Antithesis ?

**A.** An opposition of Words and Thoughts ; as, in want, what distress ? in affluence, what satiety.

**Q.** What effect has the frequent use of Antithesis upon style ?

**A.** It renders it disagreeable.

**Q.** Of what nature are Comparisons and Antitheses ?

And falls again, as loth to quit its hold,  
Thou must not go ; my soul still hovers o'er thee,  
And can't get loose."

\* Milton's comparison of Satan's appearance after his fall, to that of the Sun, suffering an eclipse, is admirable ; but of Eve, to a Woodnymph, is poor and feeble.

A. They are of a cool nature ; the productions of imagination, not of passion.

Q. What is the nature of Interrogations and Exclamations ?

A. They are passionate Figures ; spoken to produce some powerful effect.

Q. How should exclamations be used ?

A. Very sparingly. We are disgusted when called to enter into transports which there is nothing to inspire.

Q. By what means do all passionate figures of speech operate upon us ?

A. By means of Sympathy.

Q. What is Sympathy ?

A. A powerful principle in our nature, disposing us to enter into every feeling and passion expressed by others.

Q. To reach this, what should a writer attend to in the use of passionate figures ?

A. To the manner in which nature dictates the expression of any emotion or passion ; he should give his language that turn, and no other ; and he should never affect the style of a passion he does not feel.

Q. What are we to think of Typographical Figures ; or the arts of writers to increase the importance of words by separating them by a dash, and putting them in italics ?

A. That they are useless, and should be wholly laid aside.

Q. What is Vision ?

A. It is using the present tense, when de-

scribing something that is past or future, as actually passing before our eyes.\*

Q. What is Amplification?

A. It is an artful exaggeration of all the circumstances of some object or action which we want to place in a strong light.

Q. What is a Climax?

A. A gradual rise of one circumstance above another, until our idea be raised to the utmost.†

Q. What general observations may be made upon figures of speech?

A. That they are not essential to the chief beauties of composition; that, to be beautiful, they must rise naturally from the subject; that they must not be employed too frequently; and that none should attempt them without a natural genius for them.

Q. What is the foundation of all solid merit both in speaking and writing?

A. Good sense, clear ideas, and perspicuity of language. These will always command attention.

\* "I seem to myself to behold this city, the ornament of the earth, and the capital of all nations, suddenly involved in one conflagration. I see before me the slaughtered heaps of citizens lying unburied in the midst of their ruined country. The furious countenance of Cethegus rises to my view, while with a savage joy he is triumphing in your miseries."—*Cicero*.

† "It is a crime to put a Roman citizen in bonds; it is the height of guilt to scourge him: little less than parricide to put him to death. What name then shall I give to crucifying him?"—*Cicero*.

**Q.** What should be the endeavour of all who desire to excel in the liberal arts ?

**A.** To know their own genius well ; to follow nature ; and to seek to improve, but not to force it.

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## GENERAL CHARACTERS OF STYLE.

**Q.** What connexion is there between the manner in which every writer employs words, and his manner of thinking ?

**A.** A close one ; whence there is a certain character imprinted on his style, which may be denominated his manner ; commonly expressed by such general terms as strong, weak, dry, simple, affected.

**Q.** Do different subjects require different sorts of style ?

**A.** They evidently do. Treatises of philosophy ought not to be composed in the same style with orations.

**Q.** Whence arises one of the first and most obvious distinctions of style ?

**A.** From an author's spreading his thoughts more or less.

**Q.** What does this distinction form ?

**A.** The Concise and Diffuse styles.

**Q.** In what consists the Concise style ?

**A.** In compressing our thoughts into the fewest possible words ; employing none but

such as are most expressive, and such as add something material to the sense.

**Q.** Does the concise writer reject ornament?

**A.** No. He may be lively and figured; but his ornament is intended for force, rather than grace.

**Q.** In what consists the Diffuse style?

**A.** In unfolding the thought fully; placing it in a variety of lights, and giving the reader every possible assistance in understanding it.

**Q.** What advantage, in written composition, has the Concise over the Diffuse style?

**A.** It is more lively; commands better attention; makes a brisker and stronger impression; and gratifies the mind by supplying more exercise.

**Q.** What writers are most remarkable for conciseness?

**A.** Tacitus, the historian; and Montesquieu, in *L'Esprit des Loix*.

**Q.** In whom do we find a beautiful and magnificent diffuseness?

**A.** In Cicero and Addison.

**Q.** In which style should description be?

**A.** In the concise. Homer, Tacitus, and Milton, are always concise in their descriptions.

**Q.** In which, addresses to the passions?

**A.** The same. Prolixity cools the reader.

**Q.** In which, historical narrations?

**A.** It may be beautiful in either. Livy and

Herodotus are diffuse. Thucydides and Salust concise, yet all are agreeable.

Q. What do discourses, that are to be spoken, require ?

A. A flowing, copious style.

Q. What are the Nervous and Feeble styles ?

A. Much the same as the Concise and Diffuse, yet there is some difference. A style may be concise or diffuse, and yet be beautiful ; but a feeble style has neither beauty nor excellence.

Q. Where is the foundation of a nervous or weak style laid ?

A. In an author's manner of thinking. If he conceives an object strongly, he will express it with energy ; if not, in weakness.

Q. What was the fault of the early English Writers ?

A. Harshness. They studied strength to the neglect of the other qualities of style.

Q. When was our present style formed ?

A. At the restoration of King Charles II.

Q. Who has improved our language most ?

A. Dryden.

Q. What is the distinguishing quality of most of the good English writers ?

A. Elegance, rather than strength.

Q. What is a dry style ?

A. One from which ornament of every kind is entirely excluded. Such is the style of Aristotle.

Q. What is a plain style ?

**A.** It rises one degree above a dry one. Not only perspicuity, but propriety, purity, precision, and some degree of liveliness, are pursued. This is the style of Dean Swift.

**Q.** What is a neat style ?

**A.** It is next above the plain, just within the region of ornament ; the figures are short and correct, rather than bold and flowing ; it is a style easily attained, and always agreeable.

**Q.** What is an elegant style ?

**A.** A style possessing all the virtues of ornament, without any of its excesses or defects. Such is the style of Addison, Dryden, and Pope.

**Q.** What is the florid style ?

**A.** A style in which the ornaments are too rich and gaudy, for the subject. Such is the style of Hervey's *Meditations*.



## GENERAL CHARACTERS OF STYLE— DIRECTIONS FOR FORMING A PRO- PER STYLE.

**Q.** What are the four different acceptations in which, applied to writing, simplicity is taken ?

**A.** Simplicity of composition, as opposed to too great a variety of parts ; simplicity of thought, in opposition to refinement ; simpli-

city of style, in opposition to ornament ; and simplicity of ornament, in opposition to affectation of ornament.

**Q.** How does a writer of simplicity express himself?

**A.** In such a manner that every one thinks he could have written in the same way.

**Q.** What writers are the most eminent for simplicity?

**A.** The ancient original writers, who wrote from the dictates of natural genius.

**Q.** What English writers are remarkable for it?

**A.** Archbishop Tillotson, and Sir William Temple.

**Q.** Who furnishes a remarkable example of affectation, in opposition to simplicity?

**A.** Lord Shaftsbury.

**Q.** Who unites simplicity with high degrees of ornament?

**A.** Mr. Addison. He is always perspicuous and pure ; easy and musical in the construction of his sentences ; rich in figures ; and is, on the whole, the safest model for imitation which the language affords.

**Q.** May not a writer be simple, and yet have no merit?

**A.** Yes. The beautiful simplicity supposes real genius, solidity, purity, and liveliness of imagination. Of these, it is the crowning ornament.

**Q.** What is the vehement style?

**A.** It has a peculiar glow and ardour ; is



the language of a man strongly affected by what he writes, and who pours himself forth with the rapidity and fulness of a torrent. It is the style of Demosthenes' Orations.

**Q.** What is the first rule to be observed for obtaining a good style ?

**A.** Gain clear ideas on the subject concerning which you are to write or speak.

**Q.** What is the second ?

**A.** Compose frequently, slowly, and with much care.

**Q.** What is the third ?

**A.** Be well acquainted with the style of the best authors.

**Q.** What the fourth ?

**A.** Avoid a servile imitation of any. Beware of adopting any author's noted phrases, or transcribing passages from him. This hampers genius and is fatal to genuine composition.

**Q.** What the fifth ?

**A.** Adapt the style to the subject, and, if you are to speak in public, to the capacity of the hearers.

**Q.** What the last ?

**A.** Let not an attention to style detract from an higher degree of attention to the thoughts.\*

\* "Curam verborum, rerum volo esse sollicitudinem." HOR.

"To your expression be attentive ; but about your matter be solicitous."

**ELOQUENCE.**

**Q.** What is Eloquence ?

**A.** The Art of persuasion.

**Q.** What are the most essential requisites to true Eloquence ?

**A.** Solid argument ; clear method ; probity in the speaker ; and the various graces of style and utterance.

**Q.** What is the foundation of all ?

**A.** Good sense.

**Q.** How many kinds or degrees of Eloquence are there ?

**A.** Three.

**Q.** What is the first ?

**A.** That which is designed to please. Such is the eloquence of panegyrics ; inaugural orations ; addresses to great men.

**Q.** What the second ?

**A.** That which aims not merely to please, but to inform, instruct, and convince. Such is the eloquence of the bar.

**Q.** What the third ?

**A.** That which is designed to rouse the passions and exert a great power over the mind. Such is the eloquence of popular assemblies and the pulpit.

**Q.** Of what is this last and highest kind of eloquence the offspring ?

**A.** Passion ;—a state of mind agitated and fired by some object in view.

**Q.** Is that eloquence which gains the admi-

ration of mankind, ever found without warmth or passion ?

A. No.

Q. Is a man in passion, commonly eloquent ?

A. Yes. Passion exalts all the powers. . It renders the mind more penetrating, vigorous, and masterly than it is in its calm moments. The looks, gestures, words, and arguments of the passionate man are all persuasive.

Q. Is Eloquence a high talent and of great importance in society ?

A. Yes. It has indeed been abused to evil purposes ; so has reason, religion, and learning.

Q. What does it require ?

A. Soundness of understanding ; knowledge of human nature ; strong sensibility of mind ; a lively imagination ; correct judgment ; extensive command of language ; and the graces of pronunciation and delivery.

Q. Where is Eloquence chiefly to be looked for ?

A. In free states, where men dare speak their sentiments.

Q. Where were the first remarkable appearances of it ?

A. In the Grecian Republics.

Q. What was the character of these Republics ?

A. They were a number of democratical governments animated by a high spirit of freedom, rivals, and mutually jealous of each other.

**Q.** When flourished their most celebrated poets, philosophers, and orators ?

**A.** Between the battle of Marathon and the time of Alexander the Great ; a period of 150 years.

**Q.** Which of the Republics was the most noted for Eloquence ?

**A.** Athens.

**Q.** What was the character of the Athenians ?

**A.** They were an ingenious, quick, sprightly people, practised in business, and sharpened by frequent and sudden revolutions.

**Q.** How were their affairs conducted ?

**A.** In a general convention of the citizens, by reasoning, and a skilful address to the passions and interests of a popular assembly.

**Q.** Was that a good school for eloquence ?

**A.** The best the world ever knew.

**Q.** Who first distinguished himself, among the Athenians, by Eloquence ?

**A.** Pisistratus, who was cotemporary with Solon. B. C. 580.

**Q.** Who first carried eloquence to a great height ?

**A.** Pericles. He governed Athens 40 years, and was a great Orator, Statesman, and General.

**Q.** What gave power to his Eloquence ?

**A.** The confidence which the people reposed in his integrity.

**Q.** What remarkable fact is recorded of him ?

A. That he was the first Athenian who composed and put into writing a discourse designed for the public.

Q. What class of Men arose after the age of Pericles ?

A. The Rhetoricians or Sophists, whose business was to teach Eloquence, and give receipts for all sorts of Orations.

Q. What was the effect of their instructions ?

A. To degrade eloquence from its masculine character to a trifling, sophistical art.

Q. Who opposed them ?

A. Socrates ; who exploded their sophistry and recalled the attention of men to natural language, to sound and useful thought.

Q. What work did Aristotle compose on this subject ?

A. His Institutions of Rhetoric.

Q. What was his object ?

A. To direct the attention of Orators more towards convincing and affecting their hearers, than toward the musical cadence of periods.

Q. Who was the Prince of Grecian Orators ?

A. Demosthenes.

Q. What early efforts did he make to become an Orator ?

A. He shut himself up, for study, in a cave ; declaimed by the sea-shore, to accustom himself to noise ; spoke with pebbles in his mouth, to correct a defect of speech ; and, with a sword over his shoulder, to check an ungraceful motion.

**Q.** What are his capital Orations ?

**A.** His Olynthiacs and Philippics.

**Q.** What was his object in these ?

**A.** To rouse the indignation of his countrymen against Philip of Macedon, the public enemy of the liberties of Greece.

**Q.** What was the style of his eloquence ?

**A.** Strong, concise, and vehement. He was torrent that nothing could resist.

**Q.** What was the state of eloquence after his time ?

**A.** It languished and expired, for Greece lost her liberty.



## ROMAN AND MODERN ELOQUENCE.

**Q.** When was eloquence first cultivated at Rome ?

**A.** Not until near the close of the Republic.

**Q.** How are we to account for this ?

**A.** The Romans were long a martial nation, altogether rude and unskilled in arts.

**Q.** From whom did they derive Poetry, Eloquence, and Learning ?

**A.** From the Greeks.

**Q.** Did they ever equal their masters ?

**A.** Never. They were a more grave and magnificent, but a less acute and sprightly people. What the Greeks invented, the Romans polished.

**Q.** Who became predominant at Rome ?

**A. Cicero.**

**Q. What does his name suggest ?**

**A. Every thing that is splendid in Oratory. In all his Orations, is high Art. His method is clear ; his language, full and flowing ; his manner, magnificent ; and his sentiments, highly moral.**

**Q. What are his chief defects ?**

**A. Great vanity and an ostentatious parade of eloquence.**

**Q. Which has generally been considered the greatest orator, Cicero or Demosthenes ?**

**A. Demosthenes.**

**Q. Was their style of eloquence the same ?**

**A. No. The character of Demosthenes is vigour and austerity ; that of Cicero, gentleness and insinuation. In the one, you find more manliness ; in the other, more ornament.**

**Q. Was eloquence cultivated after the age of Cicero ?**

**A. No. It soon languished under the Roman Emperors and expired.**

**Q. What gave rise to a new species of eloquence, in the decline of the Roman Empire ?**

**A. The introduction of Christianity.**

**Q. Where was it exhibited ?**

**A. In the Apologies, Sermons, and Pastoral writings of the Fathers of the Church.**

**Q. Who, of the Latin Fathers, were most distinguished for eloquence ?**

**A. Lactantius, Minutius Felix, Augustine.**

**Q. Did any of them afford just models of eloquence ?**

**A.** No. Their language was harsh ; they had a love of swoln and strained thoughts and of a play of words, which was the taste of their age.

**Q.** Who among the Greeks ?

**A.** Crysostom. He is copious, smooth, and sometimes, pathetic.

**Q.** What has been the state of eloquence in modern times ?

**A.** Far inferior to its state in Greece and Rome.

**Q.** Where has it been chiefly cultivated ?

**A.** In France and England.

**Q.** What reason can be given for the inferiority of modern to ancient eloquence ?

**A.** Among the moderns there is a more correct turn of thinking, which guards them against the power of Oratory ; and there are no fields of eloquence, like those enjoyed by the Ancients.

**Q.** What curbs the Orator in the parliament of Great Britain ?

**A.** The power of the Ministry.

**Q.** What, at the bar ?

**A.** The extent and precision of the law.

**Q.** What, in the pulpit ?

**A.** The practice of reading sermons and the character of the composition ;—an English sermon being a piece of dry reasoning rather than a persuasive, animated Oration.

**Q.** What is the characteristical difference between the state of eloquence in France and England ?

**A.** In France the style of orators is orna-



mented with bolder figures, and carried on with more warmth and elevation than in Great Britain.

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## ELOQUENCE OF POPULAR ASSEMBLIES.

**Q.** How did the Ancients divide all Orations ?

**A.** Into the demonstrative ; the deliberative ; and the judicial.

**Q.** What was the scope of these ?

**A.** That of the demonstrative was to praise or blame ; that of the deliberative, to advise or dissuade ; that of the judicial, to accuse or condemn.

**Q.** Where were these employed ?

**A.** The first, on gratulatory and funeral occasions ; the second, in matters of public concern before the Senate and people ; the third, in addressing Judges.

**Q.** What division of eloquence does the train of modern speaking point out ?

**A.** The eloquence of popular assemblies, of the bar, and the pulpit.

**Q.** What is the object of popular speaking ?

**A.** Persuasion.

**Q.** What should be the basis ?

**A.** Argument and reasoning.

**Q.** What should characterize it ?

**A.** Sincerity ; earnestness and warmth ; method and decorum.

**Q.** What should be the style ?

**A.** Free and easy ; strong and descriptive.

**Q.** What, the delivery ?

**A.** Determined and firm.

**Q.** Is it safe advocating the wrong side of a question ?

**A.** No. Seldom or never will a man be eloquent, but when he is in earnest, and uttering his own sentiments.

**Q.** Should public speeches be pre-composed ?

**A.** No ; but they should be well arranged in the speaker's mind. He should always, if possible, premeditate ; but his premeditation should be of things rather than of words.

**Q.** Where are the best specimens of vigorous and spirited eloquence to be found ?

**A.** In the Orations of Demosthenes.



## ELOQUENCE OF THE BAR.

**Q.** What is the great object of a speaker at the bar ?

**A.** Conviction. To show what is true and just, rather than what is good or useful.

**Q.** How does the eloquence of the bar differ from that of popular assemblies ?

**A.** It is more cool and dispassionate. No scope is allowed to the imagination. The

field of speaking is confined to precise law and statute.

Q. Are the judicial orations of Demosthenes and Cicero adapted to the present state of the bar ?

A. No ; far from it. The judges, anciently formed a popular assembly ; and eloquence, more than jurisprudence, was the study of those who plead.

Q. In what must the foundation of a Lawyer's reputation and success be laid ?

A. In a profound knowledge of his profession.

Q. What else may be considered almost equally essential ?

A. A diligent attention to every cause with which he is entrusted, so as to be thoroughly master of all the facts and circumstances relating to it.

Q. Possessed of knowledge of law, and of his case, what is now necessary to success ?

A. Eloquence in pleading.

Q. What kind of Eloquence ?

A. Eloquence of the calm and temperate kind, and connected with close reasoning.

Q. What effect have a florid style and a sparkling manner ?

A. They detract from his weight and produce a suspicion of his failing in strength of argument.

Q. What is a common fault with speakers at the bar ?

A. Verbosity.

**Q.** What is a capital property in speaking at the bar ?

**A.** Distinctness ; first, in stating the question ; and second, in the arrangement of the parts of pleading.

**Q.** How should a pleader treat the arguments of his adversary ?

**A.** He should never do them injustice, by disguising or placing them in a false light ; but state them with accuracy and candour.

**Q.** What style should be used at the bar ?

**A.** The concise, in the narration of facts ; and the diffuse, in argumentation.

**Q.** What place has Wit ?

**A.** None at all.

**Q.** What attention should a Lawyer pay to honesty and probity ?

**A.** The utmost ; and never embark in a cause odious, and manifestly unjust.

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## ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT.

**Q.** What is the object of Pulpit Eloquence ?

**A.** To persuade men to become good.

**Q.** What, therefore, should every sermon be ?

**A.** A persuasive oration.

**Q.** Is it not the business of the preacher to instruct, to teach, to reason and argue ?

**A.** Yes. Persuasion is founded on convic-

tion. The heart must be reached through the understanding; but a sermon that does not reach the heart, falls short of its proper end.

Q. Is an abstract and philosophical manner of preaching to be condemned?

A. Yes. It deviates widely from the just plan of pulpit eloquence.

Q. What are the chief characteristics of this Eloquence, as distinguished from that of public assemblies and the bar?

A. Gravity and warmth.

Q. What do these two united form?

A. That character of preaching which the French call "*ONCTION*." They are of the utmost importance both in the composition and delivery of sermons.

Q. What must be the character of the Preacher, that he may be popular and successful?

A. That of a truly pious man.

Q. Against what will fervent piety be an effectual guard?

A. Excessive dulness and all frivolous and ostentatious harangues. It will make discourses solid, cogent, and useful.

Q. What should he keep constantly in view?

A. The great end of his labour.

Q. What subjects should he choose?

A. Those which will be most useful. No man can long be reputed a good preacher who is not an useful one.

**Q.** What is the first rule to be observed in the conduct of a sermon ?

**A.** Let unity be preserved. Let there be one main point to which the whole strain of the sermon shall refer.

**Q.** What is the second ?

**A.** Let the subject be precise and particular.

**Q.** What the third ?

**A.** Never study to say all that can be said upon a subject.

**Q.** What the fourth ?

**A.** Let instruction be made interesting to the hearers. A dry sermon can never be a good one.

**Q.** What the last ?

**A.** Avoid all particular fashions that chance to have the vogue. Never become a servile imitator of any preacher. It is disgusting and extinguishes all genius.

**Q.** What style does the Pulpit require ?

**A.** A lively, animated style ; with great perspicuity.

**Q.** Against what words should a preacher carefully guard ?

**A.** All that are grovelling, unusual, swollen, or high sounding ; and all that are merely poetical or philosophical.

**Q.** Where may he use strong figures or a pathetic style ?

**A.** Where the subject leads to them, and where he is impelled by native, unaffected warmth.

**Q.** May scripture language be employed in sermons ?

**A.** Yes. It is highly ornamental ; gives authority to doctrine ; and renders the discourse more solemn and venerable.

**Q.** Which is preferable, extemporary preaching, or that which is præcomposed ?

**A.** The former, if it could be depended upon ; but it cannot, by the readiest genius. He who writes with care, will think and speak most fully, correctly, and usefully upon religious subjects.

**Q.** Which is preferable, the practice of reading or speaking sermons ?

**A.** Speaking. No persuasive discourse can have the same effect when read, as when spoken.

**Q.** What is the difference between French and English sermons ?

**A.** A French sermon is a warm, animated exhortation ; an English, a piece of cool, instructive reasoning.

**Q.** Who are the most distinguished of the French preachers ?

**A.** Saurin among the Protestants, and Bourdaloue and Massillon among the Roman Catholics.\*

\* The finest encomium, perhaps, ever bestowed on a preacher, was given by Louis XIV. to the eloquent Bishop of Clermont, Father Massillon. After hearing him preach at Versailles, he said to him, " Father, I have heard many great orators in this chapel ; I have been highly pleased with them ; but for you, whenever

**Q.** Who, of the English ?

**A.** Tillotson, Barrow, Clarke, Atterbury.

**Q.** What was the character of English sermons in the time of Cromwell ?

**A.** They abounded with scholastic, casuistical theology ; but had very warm addresses to the conscience in the close.

**Q.** What form did preaching assume after the restoration of Charles II. ?

**A.** One more correct and polished ; but less impressive.

**Q.** What is the character of Clarke's sermons ?

**A.** They abound in good sense and clear reasoning ; but seldom touch the heart.

**Q.** What of Tillotson's ?

**A.** They are more free and warm, and are among the best models for preaching.

**Q.** What do we admire in Barrow ?

**A.** The richness of his invention, and the uncommon strength and force of his conceptions.

**Q.** What peculiar advantages attend the Eloquence of the Pulpit ?

**A.** Its subjects are infinitely important, and can be brought home to every man's heart ; they admit of the highest embellishment in description, and warmth in enforcing. The preacher has leisure to prepare ; speaks to

I hear you, I go away displeased with myself ; for I see more of my own character."



a large assembly, and meets with no interruption.

**Q.** What disadvantages ?

**A.** The subjects, though noble, are trite and familiar ; they confine the preacher to virtues and vices, while other speakers treat of persons ; there is no opposition to enliven genius and procure attention.

**Q.** What is the present state of the art of preaching ?

**A.** It is far from perfection ; but we have more reason to wonder that we hear so many instructive and eloquent sermons, than that we hear so few.



## CONDUCT OF A DISCOURSE.

**Q.** How many parts are there in a regular Oration ?

**A.** Six. The exordium ; the division ; the narration or explication ; the reasoning ; the pathetic ; and the conclusion.

**Q.** What are the objects of the exordium, or introduction ?

**A.** To conciliate the good-will of the hearers ; to raise their attention ; and render them open to persuasion.

**Q.** What should be some of its principal characteristics ?

**A.** It should be natural ; correct ; modest ;

not promising too much ; conducted with calmness suitably proportioned to the subject.

**Q.** In what manner should the subject be brought forward ?

**A.** In a clear and distinct manner, by few and plain words, without the least affectation.

**Q.** What rules should be observed in the division of a discourse ?

**A.** The several heads should be distinct from each other ; the division should be natural and precise ; should exhaust the subject ; and should not be too minute. Five or six heads, with the sub-divisions, is usually sufficient.

**Q.** Where is Narration chiefly used ?

**A.** In pleadings at the bar.

**Q.** Where Explication ?

**A.** In presenting the doctrine of the text in sermons.

**Q.** What are the qualities which Critics require in Narration and Explication ?

**A.** Distinctness, probability, and conciseness.

**Q.** What may be said of the Argumentative part of a discourse ?

**A.** That it is far the most important.

**Q.** What will here engage the attention of the Orator ?

**A.** The invention of arguments ; their proper arrangement ; and the style in which they are to be expressed.

**Q.** What two methods are used by Orators in reasoning ?

**A. The Analytic and the Synthetic.**

**Q. What is the Analytic ?**

**A. When the Orator conceals his intention concerning the point he is to prove, until he has gradually brought his hearers to the designed conclusion.**

**Q. What is the Synthetic ?**

**A. When the point to be proved is fairly laid down, and one argument after another is made to bear upon it, until the hearers are convinced. This is most generally used.**

**Q. Whence are all arguments drawn ?**

**A. From truth, duty, and interest. A speaker is always either proving that something is true ; is morally right ; or is profitable and good.**

**Q. How should arguments be arranged ?**

**A. According to their strength, placing the most feeble first.**

**Q. In which part of a discourse does eloquence reign ?**

**A. In the fifth, which is the Pathetic.**

**Q. What should be carefully considered by an Orator before he enters upon this ?**

**A. Whether his subject admits it, and what part of the discourse is most proper for it.**

**Q. What is his most effectual method to move his hearers ?**

**A. To be moved himself ; to attend to the proper language of the passions ; to make an impression, without giving notice, at a critical moment ; to avoid every thing which will di-**

vert attention ; and to retreat at the proper time and place.

**Q.** How should a discourse be concluded ?

**A.** Neither abruptly, nor unexpectedly, nor by a tedious lengthening of the subject, but with dignity and spirit, that the hearers may have a favourable impression of the subject and of the speaker.

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## PRONUNCIATION OR DELIVERY.

**Q.** How should a public speaker deliver his discourse ?

**A.** So as to be fully and easily understood by all who hear him ; and to speak with such grace and force as to please and move his audience.

**Q.** What is requisite to be fully and easily understood ?

**A.** A due loudness of voice ; distinctness of articulation ; slowness ; and propriety of pronunciation.

**Q.** How many pitches has every man in his voice ?

**A.** Three ; the high, the middle, and the low.

**Q.** Which is usually employed in conversation ?

**A.** The middle.

**Q.** Which should be in public speaking ?

**A.** The same.

**Q.** Can we give as great power of voice to this as to the high ?

**A.** Greater, and one much more pleasant to the hearer.

**Q.** What will be the effect of commencing on the high key ?

**A.** We shall speak with pain to ourselves, and be heard with pain by our audience.

**Q.** What will aid a speaker in filling a house ?

**A.** Fixing his eye upon some distant person and speaking to him.

**Q.** What contributes more than mere loudness of sound to our being well heard ?

**A.** Distinct articulation. Every syllable and every letter should be heard distinctly, without slurring, whispering, or suppressing any of the proper sounds.

**Q.** What is requisite to distinct articulation ?

**A.** Moderation. Precipitancy of speech confounds all articulation and all meaning.

**Q.** What is the first thing to be studied by all who begin to speak in public ?

**A.** To pronounce with a proper degree of slowness, and with full and clear articulation.

**Q.** What should be the public pronunciation of words ?

**A.** The same which the most polite usage sanctions in common conversation.

**Q.** What rule is to be observed respecting accent ?

**A.** Give every word the same accent in public speaking as in common conversation.

**Q.** Do many persons err here ?

**A.** Yes. They protract syllables and multiply accents from a mistaken notion that it gives gravity and force to their discourse ; whereas it gives an affected air and ruins the delivery.

**Q.** How does a speaker give grace and force to what he utters ?

**A.** By emphasis, pauses, tones, and gestures.

**Q.** What is Emphasis ?

**A.** A stronger and fuller sound of voice, than usual, by which we distinguish the accented syllable of some word on which we design to lay a particular stress, to show how it affects the rest of the sentence.\*

**Q.** How will a speaker acquire the proper management of Emphasis ?

**A.** By attaining a just conception of the

\* If the emphasis be placed wrong, we pervert and confound the meaning wholly. To give a common instance ; such a simple question as this : " Do you ride to town to-day ? " is capable of no fewer than four different acceptations, according as the emphasis is differently placed on the words. If it be pronounced thus ; *Do you* ride to town to-day ? the answer may naturally be, No ; I send my servant in my stead. If thus ; *Do you ride* to town to-day ? Answer, No ; I intend to walk. *Do you ride to town* to-day ? No ; I ride out into the fields. *Do you ride to town to-day* ? No ; but I shall to-morrow.

force and spirit of the sentiments he is to pronounce.

Q. Against what is he carefully to guard ?

A. Against multiplying emphatic words too much. If they recur too often they lose their effect.

Q. How many kinds of pauses are there ?

A. Two ; emphatical pauses, and such as mark the distinctions of sense.

Q. When should emphatical pauses be made ?

A. After something has been said of peculiar moment, and on which we want to fix the hearer's attention.

Q. What is essential to the graceful adjustment of those which mark the sense ?

A. A constant and full supply of breath.

Q. How many kinds of pauses belong to the Music of Verse ?

A. Two ; the pause at the end of the line ; and the cæsural pause, in the middle.\*

Q. Should a pause be made at the end of the line in blank verse ?

A. In reading, but not in speaking on the stage.

Q. On what should be formed the tones of public speaking ?

A. On the tones of sensible, animated conversation.

\* " Ye nymphs of Solyma ! begin the song,  
" To heav'nly themes, sublimer strains belong."

POPE.

**Q.** How do many public speakers vitiate and ruin their delivery ?

**A.** By substituting certain studied musical tones in place of the genuine expressions of sentiment, which the voice carries in natural discourse.

**Q.** How may men become good speakers ?

**A.** By following nature ; speaking always with her voice, with ease and dignity.

**Q.** What should be the modes for gesture or action in public speaking ?

**A.** The looks and gestures in which earnestness, indignation, compassion, or any other emotion discovers itself to most advantage, in the common intercourse of man.

**Q.** With which hand should gestures generally be made ?

**A.** With the right hand ; and they should proceed from the shoulder, rather than from the elbow.

**Q.** What does it especially concern a public speaker to manifest ?

**A.** Earnestness.\*

**Q.** What to obtain ?

**A.** Self-possession.†

\* “ Pleads he in earnest ? Look upon his face.  
His eyes do drop no tears ; his prayers are jest ;  
His words come from his mouth ; ours from our breast ;  
He prays but faintly, and would be denied ;  
We pray with heart and soul.” **KING RICHARD II.**

† “ Use all gently, and in the very torrent and tempest of passion, acquire a temperance that may give it smoothness.” **SHAKESPEARE.**



## 82 *Means of improving in Eloquence.*

**Q.** What to shun ?

**A.** All affectation.

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## MEANS OF IMPROVING IN ELOQUENCE.

**Q.** Is eloquence a common and easy attainment ?

**A.** No. It is a great and rare exertion of the human powers.

**Q.** Which are most numerous, eminent Poets or Orators ?

**A.** Eminent Poets.

**Q.** What advantage has the study of oratory above that of poetry ?

**A.** In poetry, one must be eminent or he is not supportable ; in oratory, a moderate station may be maintained with dignity.

**Q.** What first demands attention in Oratory ?

**A.** Personal character and disposition. He only can be an eloquent and persuasive speaker who is a virtuous man.\*

**Q.** What sentiments and dispositions should be cultivated ?

**A.** The love of justice and truth ; magnanimity of spirit ; the love of liberty and country ; zeal for great and noble designs ; and a reverence for worthy and heroic characters.

**Q.** Next to moral qualifications, what is most necessary to an Orator ?

\* “Non posse oratorem esse nisi virum bonum.”

**A.** A fund of knowledge. Good sense and knowledge are the foundation of good speaking.

**Q.** With what should he be fully acquainted?

**A.** His own profession; whether it be law, divinity, or politics. He should also be conversant with the general circle of polite literature.

**Q.** Of what use will be the study of Poetry?

**A.** It will embellish his style, suggest lively images and agreeable allusions.

**Q.** Of what the study of history?

**A.** It will furnish him with the knowledge of eminent characters and of the course of human affairs.

**Q.** What other means of improvement are there?

**A.** A habit of application and industry; attention to the best models; frequent exercise both in composing and speaking.

**Q.** What style should the Orator cultivate?

**A.** One easy, copious, less fettered by rule than the essay style;—there being a great difference between written and spoken language.

**Q.** What rules should be observed by students associated for improvement in eloquence?

**A.** They should choose subjects manly and useful; speak always with care; keep good sense and persuasion in view; and ever advocate that side of a question which they believe to be right.

**Q.** Who have been the most useful and instructive writers on the subject of Oratory ?

**A.** Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian.

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## COMPARATIVE MERIT OF THE ANCIENTS AND MODERNS.

**Q.** In what manner have distinguished writers and artists generally appeared ?

**A.** In considerable numbers at a time. Some ages have been very barren ; others, very prolific.

**Q.** What have been some of the moral causes of fertility ?

**A.** Favourable circumstances of government and manners ; encouragement from great men ; emulation among men of genius.

**Q.** How many happy ages have learned men marked out ?

**A.** Four. The Grecian Age, producing Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes ;—the Roman Age, producing Terence, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Cæsar, Cicero, Livy ;—the Age of the restoration of learning, when flourished Ariosto, Tasso, Erasmus, Michael Angelo, Raphael ; and the Age of Lewis XIV. when flourished in France, Bossuet, Fenelon, Bourdaloue. Pascal. Massillon ; and in England, Dryden. Pope, Addison, Swift, Young, Tillotson, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Clarke.

**Q.** Who are the Ancients ?

**A.** Such as lived in the two first of these periods, and before them, as Homer.

**Q.** Who are the Moderns ?

**A.** Such as lived in the two last of these ages, and other writers down to our own time.

**Q.** Is it safe for a critic to decry the Ancient Classics ?

**A.** No ; for the world has decided against him. In matters of Taste, the common sentiment is the standard ; and this, for ages, has been in their favour.

**Q.** But was not the world long in favour of a false philosophy ?

**A.** In matters of reasoning the world may long be in an error, but not in matters of taste. The universal feeling of mankind is the natural feeling, and therefore the right feeling.

**Q.** Where have the Moderns a superiority over the Ancients ?

**A.** Generally, where the natural progress of knowledge has had room to produce any considerable effects ;—as in natural philosophy, astronomy, chemistry, geography, commerce, government.

**Q.** What is the characteristical difference between the ancient poets, orators, and historians ?

**A.** Among the ancients we find higher conceptions, greater simplicity, more original fancy ; among the moderns, more art and correctness, but feebler exertions of genius. In Epic Poetry, Homer and Virgil are to this day un-

rivalled. So are Cicero and Demosthenes in oratory : Thucidydes and Tacitus in historical narration ; Horace in Lyric Poetry ; and Theocritus in Pastorals.

**Q.** To what is the superiority of the ancients over the moderns, in elegant composition, owing ?

**A.** To the fact, that to excel is become a much less considerable object. Printing also has rendered all books common and easy to be had, which rather depresses than favours the exertions of natural genius.

**Q.** Should the Greek and Roman Classics be attentively studied ?

**A.** Yes. Without a considerable acquaintance with them, no man can be reckoned a polite scholar.\*

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## HISTORICAL WRITING.

**Q.** What is the office of an Historian ?

**A.** To record truth for the instruction of mankind.

**Q.** What are the fundamental qualities of an historian ?

**A.** Impartiality, fidelity, gravity, and accuracy.

**Q.** How may historical compositions be divided ?

\* “ *Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.*”

**A.** Into such as give the history of some state through its different revolutions, as Livy's Roman history ; and such as give the history of some one great event or particular period, as Clarendon's history of the Rebellion.

**Q.** What first demands the attention of an historian in the management of his subject ?

**A.** Its unity ; that its several parts may not appear disconnected, and that an impression may be made in the mind of something that is one, whole, and entire.

**Q.** In a general history reaching through ages, can this be preserved ?

**A.** It can by a skilful writer, though less perfectly than in the history of a particular reign.

**Q.** Who of all the ancient general historians excelled here ?

**A.** Polybius ; who made it his object to show how all parts of the habitable world became subject to the Roman Empire.

**Q.** Who failed in this point ?

**A.** Thucydides, in his history of the Peloponnesian war. No one object is properly pursued.

**Q.** May the historian neglect chronological order to render his narration agreeable ?

**A.** No. He must give a distinct account of dates and of the coincidence of facts ; and he may do this without injuring his narrative.

**Q.** What next demands the attention of the historian ?

**A.** The secret springs of those actions and events which he records.

**Q.** To trace these out successfully, what is necessary ?

**A.** A thorough acquaintance with human nature and with politics.

**Q.** With what should an historian make us particularly acquainted ?

**A.** With the political constitution, the force, the revenues, the internal state of the country of which he writes ; and with its interests and connexions in respect of neighbouring countries.

**Q.** Were the ancient historians possessed of political knowledge ?

**A.** Not to any great degree ; hence they give but an imperfect view of the political causes which affected the situation of affairs.

**Q.** Who are farthest removed from this censure ?

**A.** Thucydides, Polybius, and Tacitus.

**Q.** What is the first virtue of historical narration ?

**A.** Clearness, order, and due connexion.

**Q.** In what manner should it be conducted ?

**A.** With gravity.

**Q.** Will perspicuity and gravity render it perfect ?

**A.** No. It may yet be dull. Life, body, and colouring must be given to the recital of facts, that we may behold them as present, and passing before our eyes.

**Q.** Who have excelled in picturesque, descriptive narration?

**A.** The ancient historians, Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Tacitus.

**Q.** What embellishment of history did the ancients employ, which the moderns have laid aside?

**A.** Putting orations into the mouths of some of their chief personages.

**Q.** Was there propriety in this?

**A.** No. For the oration was the production of the historian, and not of the speaker.

**Q.** What may be said of the drawing of characters?

**A.** It is one of the most splendid and difficult ornaments of historical composition.

**Q.** What two ancient authors have attempted it most?

**A.** Sallust and Tacitus.

**Q.** What place should morality have in history?

**A.** It should reign in it. An historian should always be on the side of virtue.

**Q.** Who are the principal Greek historians?

**A.** Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon.

**Q.** Who, the Roman?

**A.** Polybius, Tacitus, Livy, Sallust, Cæsar.

**Q.** Who was the earliest of the Greek historians?

**A.** Herodotus. He flourished 450 years before Christ, and wrote a general history of all nations.

**Q.** What is his character as an historian?



A. He is at all times an agreeable writer ; he relates every thing with that simplicity of manner, which never fails to interest the reader.

Q. What is the character of Thucidydes ?

A. Grave, intelligent, and judicious, possessing great strength and dignity, though deficient in unity.

Q. What is the character of Xenophon's retreat of the ten thousand ?

A. It is extremely beautiful. The circumstances are finely selected and the narration is easy and engaging.

Q. What did Polybius write ?

A. A universal history, from the beginning of the Punic to the end of the Macedonian wars, in 40 books.

Q. In what does Polybius excel ?

A. In comprehensive political views, and in a profound and distinct knowledge of military affairs.

Q. What did Tacitus write ?

A. A treatise on the manners and customs of the Germans, the life of Julius Agricola, and a history of the Roman Emperors.

Q. For what is Tacitus eminent ?

A. For his knowledge of the human heart. He is profound in reflection, striking in description, and pathetic in sentiment. In him meet the philosopher, poet, and historian.

Q. What is the subject of Livy's history ?

A. Rome from its foundation.

Q. In what does Livy excel ?

**A.** In the art of narration. His descriptions are full, plain, and natural.

**Q.** What is the subject of Sallust's history ?

**A.** The Catalinarian and Jugurthian wars.

**Q.** In what country in Europe has historical genius shone most in latter ages ?

**A.** In Italy.

**Q.** Who have been most conspicuous ?

**A.** Machiavel, Guicciarden, Davila, Father Paul.

**Q.** In what have they surpassed the ancients ?

**A.** In the profoundness and distinctness of their political views.

**Q.** What has been the character of the French historians ?

**A.** Lively, spirited, and agreeable ; but they have not equalled the Italians.

**Q.** What historian did Scotland early produce ?

**A.** Buchanan ;—an elegant but inaccurate writer.

**Q.** Who are the most considerable of the older English historians ?

**A.** Lord Clarendon and Bishop Burnet.

**Q.** Who have lately raised the British character to high reputation and dignity ?

**A.** Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon.

**Q.** What are some of the subordinate species of historical composition ?

**A.** Annals, Memoirs, and Lives.

**Q.** What are Annals ?

**A.** Collections of facts, digested according

to chronological order, rather serving for the materials of history, than aspiring to the name of history themselves.

**Q.** What are Memoirs ?

**A.** A sort of history in which the author does not pretend to give full information, but only to relate what he himself knew or was concerned in.

**Q.** What is the general character of Memoirs ?

**A.** Low and trifling.

**Q.** What exceptions are there among the French ?

**A.** The Memoirs of the Cardinal de Retz and of the Duke of Sully.

**Q.** What is Biography ?

**A.** A Narrative of the lives of men ;—it is less formal and stately than history ; but, to the bulk of readers, no less instructive.

**Q.** Who is the most distinguished of biographical writers ?

**A.** Plutarch ; he wrote the lives of most of the eminent men of antiquity.

**Q.** What is the character of his work ?

**A.** It is not distinguished for beauty ; but it will always be considered as a valuable treasure of instruction.

**Q.** What great improvement has lately been introduced into historical composition ?

**A.** An attention to laws, customs, commerce, religion, literature, and whatever tends to show the spirit and genius of nations. The progress of the human mind is now thought to

be of more importance, than a detail of sieges and battles.

Q. To whom are we indebted for this ?

A. To Voltaire, in his age of Louis XIV.

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## PHILOSOPHICAL WRITING—DIALOGUE.

Q. What is the professed object of Philosophy ?

A. To convey instruction.

Q. What attention should be paid to the style of Philosophical Writing ?

A. Not so much as in other kinds of composition, but it must not be wholly neglected.

Q. What does Philosophy strictly require ?

A. The utmost perspicuity and accuracy.

Q. What else does it admit of ?

A. A polished, neat, and elegant style ; metaphors, comparisons, and all the calm figures of speech.

Q. What are good specimens of philosophical writing ?

A. The philosophical treatises of Plato and Cicero, and Locke's treatise on the human understanding.

Q. What rank does a philosophical, moral, or critical dialogue hold among the works of Taste ?

A. A high rank, and is very difficult of execution.

**Q.** What should it be ?

**A.** A natural and spirited representation of real conversation ; exhibiting the character and manners of the several speakers, and suiting to each that peculiarity of thought and expression which distinguishes him from another.

**Q.** Are the greatest part of modern dialogues of this sort ?

**A.** They are far from it ; are very puerile.

**Q.** Who among the ancients are eminent for the beauty of their dialogues ?

**A.** Plato, Cicero, and Lucian.

**Q.** What is the character of Plato's dialogues ?

**A.** They are eminent for beauty. The characters of the sophists are well drawn. We are introduced into a real conversation, supported with life and spirit.

**Q.** How do Cicero's dialogues compare with Plato's ?

**A.** They are not so spirited and characteristic, but are agreeable and well supported.

**Q.** What was Lucian's object in his dialogues of the dead ?

**A.** To expose the follies of superstition and the pedantry of philosophy.

**Q.** How did he effect it ?

**A.** By wit and humour.

**Q.** Who have excelled among the moderns ?

**A.** Fontenelle, More, and Bishop Berkley.

**Q.** What do Berkley's dialogues, concerning the existence of matter, furnish ?

**A.** An instance of a very abstract subject

made clear and intelligible by means of conversation.

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## EPISTOLARY WRITING—FICTITIOUS HISTORY.

**Q.** What place does Epistolary Writing hold ?

**A.** A kind of middle place between the serious and amusing species of composition.

**Q.** Do philosophical or political treatises in the form of letters come under the head of epistolary writing ?

**A.** No. Nothing but what is of the easy, familiar style ;—conversation carried on between two friends at a distance.

**Q.** On what does its merit and agreeableness depend ?

**A.** On its introducing us to some acquaintance with the writer. There we look for the man, not the author.

**Q.** What is its first and fundamental requisite ?

**A.** Simplicity ; not excluding, however, sprightliness and wit.

**Q.** What should be its style ?

**A.** Not too highly polished, but neat and correct.

**Q.** What attention should be paid to decorum ?

**A.** All which our own character and that of others demand.

**Q.** Who have left us the most celebrated collections of letters among the ancients ?

**A.** Pliny and Cicero.

**Q.** What is the character of Pliny's letters ?

**A.** They are elegant and polite, and exhibit a very amiable view of the Author ; but they seem too much to be designed for the public.

**Q.** What of Cicero's ?

**A.** They are the most valuable extant in any language.

**Q.** What collection is most distinguished in the English language ?

**A.** That of Mr. Pope, Dean Swift, and their friends.

**Q.** What is the character of this collection ?

**A.** It is entertaining, contains much wit and ingenuity ; but shows too much study and refinement.

**Q.** Who are most esteemed among the French letter writers ?

**A.** Voiture and Madame de Sevignes.

**Q.** What English lady has much excelled in epistolary writing ?

**A.** Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

**Q.** What is the use of fictitious histories ?

**A.** They furnish one of the best channels for conveying instruction, for painting human life and manners, and for exhibiting the beauty of virtue and odiousness of vice.

**Q.** Of what did Lord Bacon consider our taste for fictitious history a proof ?

**A.** Of the greatness and dignity of the human mind ; for it shows that common objects

do not give it entire satisfaction. We seek for a more heroic and splendid order of things.

Q. What has brought it so much into contempt ?

A. The faulty manner of its execution, rather than its nature.

Q. When did fictitious history first commence ?

A. In the earliest periods. The genius of the eastern nations in particular, was, from the earliest times, much turned towards invention and the love of fiction.

Q. What fictitious histories were fashionable in the dark ages ?

A. The romances of knight errantry ; in which were displayed a new and wonderful sort of world, knights, and heroines, magicians, dragons, giants, invulnerable men, winged horses, enchanted armour, and enchanted castles, adventures absolutely incredible : yet they were writings of the highly moral and heroic kind.

Q. Why were these called Romances ?

A. Because they were first written in France, in the Roman or Romance language.

Q. What furnished new matter and increased the spirit for such writings ?

A. The crusades of the Christians against the Saracens ; which, from the 11th to the 16th century, bewitched all Europe.

Q. Who exploded the taste for this sort of writing ?



A. Cervantes, by his history of Don Quixote.

Q. What succeeded ?

A. The magnificent heroic romance, which soon dwindled to the familiar novel.

Q. What was the character of novels during the age of Louis XIV. and Charles II. ?

A. They were of a trifling nature, without the appearance of moral tendency, or useful instruction.

Q. Has their character since been improved ?

A. Some ; but they oftener tend to dissipation and idleness, than to any good purpose.

Q. Who excel in this kind of writing, the English or the French ?

A. The French. The English neither relate so agreeably, nor draw characters with so much delicacy.

Q. What productions of the French have merit ?

A. Gil Blas, by Le Sage ; the Marianne of Marivaux ; and the Nouvelle Heloise of Rousseau.

Q. What fiction in the English language is supported unusually well ?

A. The adventures of Robinson Crusoe.

Q. For what are Fielding's novels distinguished ?

A. For their humour ; his characters are lively and natural, and his stories are favourable to humanity.

Q. Who is the most moral of the English novel writers ?

A. Richardson ; the author of *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*.

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## POETRY.

Q. What is Poetry ?

A. The language of passion, or of an enlivened imagination, formed, most commonly, into regular numbers.

Q. To whom did the Greeks ascribe the origin of poetry ?

A. To Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus.

Q. Were they correct in this ?

A. No. Poetry is coeval with man.

Q. It has often been said that Poetry is older than prose : What are we to understand by this, that men first talked in poetical numbers ?

A. No : but that poetry was committed to writing long before prose. Priests, Philosophers, and Statesmen, all, at first, delivered their instructions in poetry : until the age of Herodotus, history had appeared only in poetical tales.

Q. To what was this owing ?

A. To the fact that plain discourse had not power to attract man in a rude, uncivilized state. Songs also could be better remembered and transmitted to posterity, than any other composition.

Q. With what attention were the ancient bards treated ?

A. They were always kept near the person of the Sovereign ; they recorded all his great exploits ; they were employed as ambassadors ; and their persons were held sacred.

Q. What is the character of the Gothic poetry ?

A. Remarkably fierce, breathing nothing but slaughter and blood.

Q. What cast did the poetry of the Greeks early receive ?

A. A philosophical cast. Orpheus, Linus, Musæus treated of creation and of chaos, and of the rise of things.

Q. Who have been the greatest poets in the East ?

A. The Arabians and Persians ; but their poetry did not assume as regular a structure as that of the Greeks.

Q. Were the different kinds of poetry in the first ages properly separated from each other ?

A. No ; they were all mingled in the same composition.

Q. Was this the case also with history, eloquence, and poetry ?

A. Yes. All composition was blended in one mass, as all occupations were united in one person.

Q. How came prose writing to assume the place of poetry ?

A. From a wish that men, occupied with the subjects of policy and useful arts, had to be instructed and informed, as well as moved.

Q. What did Poetry thenceforth become ?

**A.** A separate art, calculated chiefly to please, and confined to such subjects as related to the imagination and passions.

**Q.** What was the early companion of poetry ?

**A.** Music. The bard sung his verses, and played upon his harp or lyre at the same time.

**Q.** What was the effect of this union ?

**A.** Music enlivened and animated poetry, and poetry gave force and expression to music.

**Q.** When instrumental music came to be studied as a separate art, divested of the poet's song; what was the consequence ?

**A.** It lost all its ancient power of inflaming the hearers with strong emotions, and sunk into an art of mere amusement.

**Q.** Does not poetry preserve, in all countries, some remains of its original connexion with music ?

**A.** Yes, in its versification or artificial arrangement of words and syllables to produce agreeable sound.

**Q.** How was versification effected by the Greeks and Romans ?

**A.** By the use of metrical feet, dactyles, spondees, iambus, &c.

**Q.** Are these introduced into English verse ?

**A.** No. The genius of our language does not admit them.

**Q.** What is the structure of our English heroic verse ?

**A.** Iambic ; composed of a succession,

nearly alternate, of syllables unaccented and accented.

Q. How many syllables are there in a line ?

A. Ten ; four or five of which are accented.

Q. What essential circumstance is there in the constitution of our verse ?

A. The cæsural pause, which falls towards the middle of each line.

Q. Is not this found in other languages ?

A. Yes ; but in the English it has this peculiar beauty, that it may fall after the 4th, the 5th, the 6th, or 7th syllable ; while, in other languages, it is invariably after the 6th.

Q. How does the cæsural pause affect the line ?

A. It gives it a sprightly air when it falls on the 4th syllable, and grave as it advances to the 7th.\*

Q. What is the principal defect in rhyme ?

A. The full close which it forces upon the ear at the end of every couplet.

\* *On the 4th—*

On her white breast | a sparkling cross she wore,  
Which Jews might kiss | and infidels adore.

*On the 5th—*

Eternal sunshine | of the spotless mind,  
Each prayer accepted | and each wish resign'd.

*On the 6th—*

The wrath of Peleus' son | the direful spring  
Of all the Grecian woes | O goddess, sing !

*On the 7th—*

And in the smooth description | murmur still,  
Long lov'd ador'd ideas ! | all adieu.

**Q.** Is it favourable to the sublime ?

**A.** No ; nor to the highly pathetic strain. An epic poem or a tragedy would be fettered and degraded by it.

**Q.** To what is it best adapted ?

**A.** To compositions of a temperate strain ; to pastorals, elegies, epistles, satires.

**Q.** What advantages does blank verse possess ?

**A.** Great. It is a noble, bold, and disencumbered species of versification, particularly suited to subjects of dignity and force.

**Q.** What was the measure generally used in the days of Queen Elizabeth and Charles I. ?

**A.** The stanza of eight lines ; such as Spenser employs.

**Q.** Who first brought couplets into vogue ?

**A.** Waller ; but Dryden established their usage.

**Q.** What change did Pope introduce ?

**A.** He abolished the triplets, or three lines rhyming together, in which Dryden abounded.



## PASTORAL POETRY—LYRIC POETRY.

**Q.** When did Pastoral Poetry assume its present form ?

**A.** Not until men had begun to be assembled in large cities ; to be fatigued with the bustle of courts ; to look back to the more simple and innocent life of their ancestors, and

imagine some degree of felicity there superior to what they enjoyed ; then the poets wrote their pastorals, and were admired.

**Q.** What is there peculiarly agreeable in Pastoral Poetry ?

**A.** It recalls to our imagination the gay scenes and pleasing views of nature, which are the delight of our childhood ; and exhibits to us a life of peace, leisure, and innocence.

**Q.** Have many excelled in it ?

**A.** Very few.

**Q.** What state of the pastoral life should the poet exhibit ?

**A.** That which we may suppose once to have been in the more simple and early ages, when it was a life of ease and abundance ; avoiding the mean, servile, and laborious state, and that which is too refined and elevated ever to exist but in imagination.

**Q.** Where should the scene of a pastoral poem lie, and what characters should be introduced into it ?

**A.** The scene should lie in the country, and the characters should be those whose occupations are wholly rural.

**Q.** What should be the subject ?

**A.** Rural employments, enlivened by scenes of domestic felicity or disquiet ; the attachment of friends and brothers ; the rivalry and competition of lovers ; the unexpected successes and misfortunes of families.

**Q.** Who are the two great fathers of Pastoral Poetry ?

**A. Theocritus and Virgil.\***

**Q. Where did Theocritus lay the scene of his pastorals ?**

**A. In Sicily, his native country. He is the original, of which Virgil is the imitator.**

**Q. What has been the character of the modern writers of Pastorals ?**

**A. They have generally contented themselves with copying the descriptions of the ancient poets.**

**Q. Who of all the moderns have most excelled ?**

**A. Gesner ; a poet of Switzerland.**

**Q. What is the character of Pope's and Philip's Pastorals ?**

**A. They do no great honour to the English poetry. Pope wrote too young, and Philips wanted genius.**

**Q. What of Shenstone's Pastoral ballad ?**

**A. It is one of the most elegant poems of this kind in English.**

**\* The following beautiful lines are a translation from Virgil.**

**" Happy old man ! here mid th' accustomed streams,  
And sacred springs you'll shun the scorching beams ;  
While from yon willow fence, thy pastures bound,  
The bees that seek their flowery stores around,  
Shall sweetly mingle, with the whispering boughs,  
Their lulling murmurs and invite repose.  
While from steep rocks the pruner's song is heard ;  
Nor the soft cooing dove, thy fav'rite bird,  
Meanwhile shall cease to breathe her melting strain,  
Nor turtles from the aerial elms to plain."**

**WARTON.**



**Q.** In what new form has pastoral writing appeared in latter ages ?

**A.** In the form of a play, or regular drama ; as 'Tasso's *Aminta* ; Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*.

**Q.** What is Lyric Poetry ?

**A.** That which is intended to be sung, or accompanied with music ;—that, in which poetry retains its first and most ancient form.

**Q.** How many kinds of Odes are there ?

**A.** Four. Sacred Odes, as the Psalms of David ; heroic odes, as those of Pindar ; philosophical and moral odes, as the odes of Horace ; and festive odes, as some of Horace's and all Anacreon's.

**Q.** Whence arises one of the chief difficulties in composing odes ?

**A.** From that enthusiasm which is a characteristic of lyric poetry. The poet is in danger of becoming extravagant, obscure, and wandering through so many different measures as to lose all melody.

**Q.** Who is the great father of Lyric Poetry ?

**A.** Pindar. His genius was sublime ; his expressions beautiful ; but he was digressive and obscure.

**Q.** Who has most excelled in this ?

**A.** Horace. He joins connected thought and good sense, with the highest beauties of poetry.

**Q.** Whose odes among the French, have been much and justly admired ?

A. Those of Rosseau. They possess great beauty both of sentiment and expression.

Q. What lyric poets have appeared among the English?

A. Dryden, Gray, and Cowley.

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## DIDACTIC POETRY—DESCRIPTIVE POETRY.

Q. What is Didactic Poetry?

A. Poetry, the professed intention of which is to convey knowledge and instruction.

Q. What is the highest species of it?

A. A regular treatise on some philosophical or useful subject; as Virgil's *Georgics*, Horace's *Art of Poetry*, Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*.

Q. In what consists its fundamental merit?

A. In sound thought, just principles, clear and apt illustrations.

Q. What is essentially requisite in didactic works?

A. Method and order; so that a connected train of instruction may be exhibited to the reader.

Q. Who has failed most here?

A. Horace, in his art of poetry.

Q. What liberty is here allowed in episodes and embellishments?

A. Great; as on these depends the interest

of the poem. In his digressions lie the principal beauties of Virgil's *Georgics*.

Q. Who has attempted the richest and most poetical form of didactic writing in English?

A. Dr. Akenside, in his *Pleasures of the Imagination*; a work of much genius.

Q. What is the style of Satires and Epistles?

A. More familiar than solemn philosophical poetry.

Q. Who were the principal satirists amongst the ancients?

A. Horace, Juvenal, and Persius.

Q. What was their object?

A. The reformation of morals. They boldly censured vice and vicious characters.

Q. Whose ethical epistles deserve to be mentioned with signal honour as a model.

A. Pope's.

Q. What is his standing as a poet?

A. In the more sublime parts of poetry he is not so distinguished as some; but, within a certain limited region, he has been outdone by none. He is remarkable for a concise, spirited style, which gives animation to satires and epistles.

Q. What are some of his principal productions?

A. A translation of the *Iliad*; his *Rape of the Lock*; *Essay on Man*; *Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard*; and *Imitations of Horace*.

Q. What moral and didactic poet, among the English, deserves particular notice?

A. Young.

Q. What are his chief works ?

A. His *Universal Passion*, and *Night Thoughts*.

Q. What may be said of his *Night Thoughts* ?

A. There is in them much energy of expression, many pathetic passages, happy images, and pious reflections ; but the sentiments are frequently overstrained, and the style is too obscure to be pleasing.

Q. What French poet has excelled in the didactic ?

A. Boileau, who produced many valuable satires and epistles.

Q. What is *Descriptive Poetry* ?

A. Not any particular form of composition, but it enters into every species of poetry, and demands no small attention.

Q. Of what is description the great test ?

A. Of a poet's imagination ; it always distinguishes an original from a second rate genius.

Q. How does nature appear to an inferior genius ?

A. Exhausted by those who have gone before him in the same tract ; his conceptions of it are loose and vague ; and his expressions, feeble and general.

Q. How does a true poet present an object ?

A. So that we imagine we see it before our eyes ; he catches the distinguishing features, and gives it the colours of life and reality.

**Q.** In what lies the great art of picturesque description ?

**A.** In the selection of circumstances.

**Q.** What should these be ?

**A.** Such as are new and original ; as particularize the object, and mark it strongly.

**Q.** What should be mixed with inanimate objects to enliven description ?

**A.** Living beings. Scenes of dead and still life are apt to pall upon us.\*

**Q.** On what does much of the beauty of descriptive poetry depend ?

**A.** On a right choice of epithets. Such epithets as barbarous discord, mighty chiefs, hateful envy, swell the language ; but impart neither force nor beauty to the poem.

**Q.** Which is the largest and fullest of all professed descriptive compositions ?

**A.** Thompson's Seasons ; a work which possesses very uncommon merit.

**Q.** Which is the richest and most remarkable ?

\* The following is a powerful description of the pestilence that destroyed the English fleet at Carthage :—

—“ You, gallant Vernon, saw  
The miserable scenes ; you pitying saw  
To infant weakness, sink the warrior's arms :  
Saw the deep racking pang ; the ghastly form ;  
The lip pale quiv'ring ; and the beamless eye  
No more with ardour bright ; you heard the groans  
Of agonizing ships from shore to shore ;  
Heard nightly plung'd, amid the sullen waves,  
The frequent corse.”——

**A. Milton's Allegro and Penseroso.\***

**Q. What other poets are remarkable for description ?**

**A. Homer and Virgil, Ossian and Shakspeare. They are all simple and concise, and give an idea which a painter or statuary could lay hold of and work after them ; which is one of the strongest and most decisive trials of the real merit of description.**

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## **POETRY OF THE HEBREWS.**

**Q. Which of the Sacred Writings are poetical ?**

**\* The following from the Penseroso is very picturesque.**

—————" I walk unseen  
On the dry, smooth shaven green,  
To behold the wandering moon,  
Riding near her highest noon ;  
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,  
Stooping thro' a fleecy cloud.  
Oft on a plat of rising ground,  
I hear the far off curfew sound,  
Over some wide watered shore,  
Swinging slow with solemn roar :  
Or, if the air will not permit,  
Some still removed place will sit,  
Where gloomy embers thro' the room,  
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom ;  
Far from all resort of mirth,  
Save the cricket on the hearth,  
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,  
To bless the doors from nightly harm."

A. The book of Job ; the Psalms of David ; the Song of Solomon ; the Lamentations of Jeremiah ; a great part of the Prophetical Writings ; and several passages scattered through the historical books.

Q. Were music and poetry early cultivated among the Hebrews ?

A. Yes ; in the days of the Judges, they prophesied with the psaltery, tabret, and harp before them ; but in the days of David, music and poetry were carried to their greatest height.

Q. What were his institutions relating to them ?

A. He appointed four thousand Levites, who were divided into twenty-four courses, each course under a leader, whose business it was to sing hymns, and perform on instruments in the public worship.

Q. What is the general construction of the Hebrew Poetry ?

A. It consists in dividing every period into correspondent members which answer to one another both in sense and sound ; as “ Sing unto the Lord a new song—Sing unto the Lord all the earth ”—“ Declare his glory among the heathen—his wonders among all people.”

Q. How were their sacred hymns sung ?

A. By choirs who answered alternately to each other. One began, “ The Lord reigneth—let the earth rejoice.” The other responded, “ Let the multitudes of the Isles be glad thereof.”

**Q.** Do we find this method of composition in other poetry, besides that which was designated to be sung?

**A.** Yes; it pervades the prophetic writings. Thus in Isaiah, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come—and the glory of the Lord is arisen upon thee."

**Q.** By what else is the sacred poetry of the Hebrews distinguished?

**A.** By the highest beauties of strong, concise, bold, and figurative expression. It abounds with metaphors, comparisons, allegories, and especially personifications.

**Q.** Whence were their figures generally taken?

**A.** From scenery in their own country; from the rites and ceremonies of their religion; and from remarkable incidents in their history.

**Q.** What are the several kinds of poetical composition, which we find in scripture?

**A.** The didactic, elegiac, pastoral, and lyric.

**Q.** Where do we find the didactic?

**A.** In the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

**Q.** Where the elegiac?

**A.** In the lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan; in several passages in the prophetic books; in several of David's Psalms; and in the whole of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which is the most regular and perfect elegiac composition in the world.

**Q.** Where the pastoral?

**A.** In the Song of Solomon, which is a per-



petual dialogue between personages in the character of shepherds, and full of rural and pastoral images.

**Q.** Where the lyric ?

**A.** In the song of Moses ; the song of Deborah ; and the whole book of Psalms. In the latter, the ode is exhibited in all its forms.

**Q.** Who are the most eminent of the sacred poets ?

**A.** David, Isaiah, and the author of the book of Job.

**Q.** In what does David chiefly excel ?

**A.** In the pleasing, the soft, and the tender.

**Q.** What is the reigning character of Isaiah ?

**A.** Majesty. He is, without exception, the most sublime of all poets.

**Q.** To what does Jeremiah incline ?

**A.** To the tender and elegiac.

**Q.** For what is Ezekiel distinguished ?

**A.** For force and ardour.

**Q.** Which of the minor prophets are distinguished for poetical spirit ?

**A.** Hosea, Joel, Micah, Habakkuk, and, especially, Nahum.

**Q.** Which of the prophetic books is destitute of poetry ?

**A.** Daniel and Jonah.

**Q.** Where is laid the scene of the book of Job ?

**A.** In the land of Uz, which is part of Arabia.

**Q.** What is its imagery ?

**A.** Of a different kind from that employed by the Hebrew poets ; no allusion is made to the land of Judea, or the Jewish rites and history ; the longest comparison is to a brook that fails in the season of heat.

**Q.** What is the character of the poetry of Job ?

**A.** It is superior to that of all the sacred writers, except Isaiah. A peculiar glow of fancy and strength of description characterize it. He renders visible whatever he treats of.

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## EPIC POETRY.

**Q.** What is an Epic Poem ?

**A.** The recital of some illustrious enterprise in a poetical form.

**Q.** What is its general character ?

**A.** It is the most dignified of all poetical works, and the most difficult of execution.

**Q.** What are some of the principal epic poems that have been written ?

**A.** The Iliad of Homer ; the *Æneid* of Virgil ; the Jerusalem of Tasso ; Milton's *Paradise Lost* ; Lucan's *Pharsalia* ; Ossian's *Fingal* ; Camoens' *Lusiad* ; Voltaire's *Henriade*.

**Q.** What is the predominant character of the Epic ?

**A.** Admiration, excited by heroic actions.

**Q.** What is its moral character ?

**A.** Superior to that of any other poetry. Valour, truth, justice, friendship, magnanimity, and piety, are constantly presented under splendid and honourable colours.

**Q.** What properties should the action or subject of the poem have ?

**A.** Unity, greatness, and that which is interesting.

**Q.** What is meant by its unity ?

**A.** That it be one action or enterprise which the poet chooses for his subject ; and that the action be entire and complete.

**Q.** Does this exclude Episodes ?

**A.** No.

**Q.** What are Episodes ?

**A.** Certain actions or incidents introduced into the narration, connected with the principal action ; yet not so essential to it as to destroy, if they had been omitted, the main subject of the poem.

**Q.** What are the rules regarding their introduction ?

**A.** They must have a sufficient connexion with the poem ; must present objects of a different kind from those which go before, and those which follow ; and must be particularly elegant and well finished.

**Q.** What contributes to the grandeur of the Epic subject ?

**A.** Antiquity. It tends to aggrandize both persons and events, and allows the poet the liberty of adorning his subject by means of fiction.

**Q.** What will tend much to make an Epic interesting ?

**A.** The introduction of affecting incidents ; placing the heroes in dangerous and trying situations ; and winding up the plot in a natural and probable manner.

**Q.** How should the Epic poem end ?

**A.** Generally, successfully ; Lucan and Milton have taken a contrary course.

**Q.** What is the duration of the epic action ?

**A.** Various ; the action of the Iliad lasts forty-seven days ; of the Odyssey, fifty-eight ; of the Æneid, a year and some months.

**Q.** How may poetic characters be divided ?

**A.** Into general and particular ;—such as are wise, brave, and virtuous, without any further distinction ; and such as express the species of bravery and virtue, for which any one is eminent.

**Q.** In which is genius chiefly exerted ?

**A.** In the latter.

**Q.** In this, who has excelled ?

**A.** Homer. Tasso has come next. Virgil has been most deficient.

**Q.** What one personage is essential to an epic poem ?

**A.** A hero ; or one distinguished above all the rest.

**Q.** What advantage is obtained by it ?

**A.** It renders the unity of the subject more sensible ; tends to interest us more in the enterprise ; and gives the poet an opportunity of exerting his talents for adorning and displaying one character with more splendour.

**Q.** What other personages are usually introduced into epic poems besides human actors ?

**A.** Gods, or supernatural beings.

**Q.** Is this machinery essential ?

**A.** Not absolutely ; yet it enables the poet to aggrandize his subject, and to enlarge and diversify his plan.

**Q.** What machinery do allegorical personages love, discord, fame, and the like, form ?

**A.** The worst of any ; and should never be permitted to bear any share in the action of the poem.

**Q.** What should the narration be ?

**A.** Perspicuous, animated, and enriched with all the beauties of poetry.

**Q.** What the ornaments ?

**A.** All of the grave and chaste kind.

**Q.** What objects should be presented to us ?

**A.** None but the great, tender, and pleasing.



## HOMER'S ILIAD AND ODYSSEY—VIRGIL'S ÆNEID.

**Q.** Who is the father of Epic Poetry ?

**A.** Homer.

**Q.** What reflection is necessary, that the reader may enter into the spirit of Homer ?

**A.** That he is reading the most ancient book in the world next to the Bible ; that he is not to look for the correctness and elegance of the

Augustan age, but for much of the ferocity and passion of the savage state.

Q. What is the subject of the Iliad ?

A. The quarrel of two chieftains about a female slave. Agamemnon, leader of the Greeks against Troy, offends Achilles by taking from him Briseis ; whereupon Achilles refuses to take part in the enterprise. Great misfortunes ensue ; until union being restored, victory is obtained.

Q. What is the moral ?

A. That a misunderstanding between princes is the ruin of the common cause.

Q. Was Homer happy in the choice of his subjects ?

A. Very. In his days no object could be more splendid and dignified than the Trojan war.

Q. Who is his hero or principal character ?

A. Achilles.

Q. What has, with great reason, in every age, been given to Homer ?

A. The praise of high invention.

Q. In what does he particularly excel all writers ?

A. In drawing characters.

Q. To what is this owing ?

A. To his being so dramatic a writer, abounding every where with dialogue and conversation.

Q. What is the character of Homer's gods ?

A. They are not much elevated above his heroes, except Jupiter ; who often appears with awful majesty.

**Q.** What is Homer's style ?

**A.** Easy, natural, and highly animated.

**Q.** What is his versification ?

**A.** Uncommonly melodious ; carrying a resemblance in the sound to the sense and meaning, beyond that of any poet.

**Q.** What is his description of battles ?

**A.** Very masterly ; such as to place the reader in the very midst of the engagement.

**Q.** What are the two great characters of the Homeric Poetry ?

**A.** Simplicity and fire.

**Q.** What is the criticism of Longinus upon the *Odyssey* ?

**A.** That Homer may here be compared to the setting sun, whose grandeur still remains without the heat of his meridian beams.

**Q.** What is the subject of the *Æneid* of Virgil ?

**A.** The settlement of Æneas in Italy, by order of the gods.

**Q.** Was this subject a happy one ?

**A.** Yes. Nothing could be more noble ; carry more of epic dignity ; or be more flattering to the Roman people ; than Virgil's deriving the origin of their state from so famous a hero.

**Q.** What do we discover on opening the *Æneid* ?

**A.** All the correctness and improvement of the Augustan age.

**Q.** How has Virgil preserved the unity of action ?

**A.** Perfectly ; from beginning to end, one main object is kept in view.

**Q.** Where has he most failed ?

**A.** In drawing characters. In this respect the *Æneid* is insipid compared with the *Iliad*.

**Q.** What is the principal and distinguishing excellence of Virgil ?

**A.** Tenderness. This, in an epic poem, is the merit next to sublimity.

**Q.** How do Virgil's battles compare with Homer's ?

**A.** They are far inferior in point of fire and sublimity.

**Q.** How his Episodes ?

**A.** Some are equal ; and the descent into hell superior to any thing of the kind in Homer.

**Q.** What, in general, is the comparative merit of these two poets ?

**A.** Homer is the greatest genius ; Virgil the more correct writer : Homer was an original ; Virgil, a copyist. The strength of the former lies in his power of warming the fancy ; of the latter, of touching the heart.

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LUCAN'S PHARSALIA—TASSO'S JERUSALEM—ARIOSTO—CAMOENS' LUSIAD.

**Q.** Who is the next great poet of ancient times, after Homer and Virgil ?

**A.** Lucan.

**Q.** What epic poem did he write ?



A. The Pharsalia.

Q. What was the subject of this ?

A. The triumph of Cæsar over the Roman liberty.

Q. Was it a happy subject ?

A. No ; for it was too full of cruelty and bloodshed, and too near the times in which he lived.

Q. How does Lucan draw characters ?

A. With great spirit and force.

Q. Who is his hero ?

A. Pompey ; but he is always eclipsed by Cæsar.

Q. In what does his principal merit consist ?

A. In his sentiments, which are generally noble and striking.

Q. What is his great defect ?

A. Want of moderation. His genius had strength, but no tenderness and sweetness.

Q. Who is the most distinguished epic poet of modern ages ?

A. Tasso.

Q. What poem did he leave ?

A. Jerusalem Delivered, which was published in 1574.

Q. What is the subject of this ?

A. The recovery of Jerusalem from the infidels by the united powers of Christendom ;—a splendid, venerable, and heroic enterprise.

Q. What has Tasso shown in the conduct of the story ?

A. A rich and fertile invention.

**Q.** How are his characters ?

**A.** Clearly marked and well supported.

**Q.** What is his machinery ?

**A.** Noble, when celestial beings interpose ;  
but poor, when devils, enchanters, and conjurors act a part.

**Q.** For what is he most censurable ?

**A.** A certain romantic vein.

**Q.** What is his rank as an epic poet ?

**A.** Next to Homer and Virgil.

**Q.** Who was the great rival of Tasso in Italian poetry ?

**A.** Ariosto.

**Q.** What did he publish ?

**A.** The *Orlando Furioso*.

**Q.** Is this an epic ?

**A.** Not strictly : he unites in it all sorts of poetry.

**Q.** What is his character as a poet ?

**A.** High. Whatever strain he assumes, he excels in.

**Q.** Of what poet do the Portuguese boast ?

**A.** Camoens ; a cotemporary of Tasso.

**Q.** What is the subject of his poem ?

**A.** The discovery of the East-Indies by Vasco de Gama.

**Q.** Who is the hero ?

**A.** Vasco ; and the only personage who makes any figure.

**Q.** What is the machinery of the *Lusiad* ?

**A.** Extravagant and foolish ;—a mixture of Pagan Mythology and Christianity.

**FENELON'S TELEMACHUS—VOLTAIRE'S HENRIADE—MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.**

**Q.** Who wrote the adventures of Telemachus?

**A.** Fenelon.

**Q.** How are they written ?

**A.** In a measured poetical prose, which is remarkably harmonious.

**Q.** What may be said of the plan of the work ?

**A.** That it is well contrived ; is neither deficient in epic grandeur, nor unity of object.

**Q.** How has Fenelon managed the ancient mythology ?

**A.** Better than any modern poet.

**Q.** What are his descriptions ?

**A.** Rich and beautiful, especially those of the soft and calmer scenes.

**Q.** What improvement has he made upon Homer and Virgil, in the descent to hell ?

**A.** Great ; from his having more correct views of theology.

**Q.** What is the subject of Voltaire's *Henriade* ?

**A.** The triumph of Henry the 4th over the arms of the league.

**Q.** What does the action of the poem properly include ?

**A.** Only the siege of Paris.

**Q.** What is the character of this ?

**A.** It is perfectly epic ; great, interesting, and conducted with a sufficient regard to the critical rules.

**Q.** To what defects is it liable ?

**A.** To its being founded wholly on the civil wars, and being of too recent a date.

**Q.** What is the machinery ?

**A.** Of the worst kind, that of allegorical beings. Discord, Cunning, and Love appear as personages ; which is contrary to every rule of rational criticism.

**Q.** What are its sentiments ?

**A.** High and noble.

**Q.** Can *Paradise Lost* properly be classed among epic poems ?

**A.** It is doubtful, because its subject is so remote from the affairs of this world ; but wherever it be placed, it is one of the highest efforts of poetical genius.

**Q.** In what does this poem chiefly differ from other epics ?

**A.** In this—that Angels and Devils are not the machinery, but principal actors ; and what in others is the marvellous, is here only the natural course of events.

**Q.** What may be said of the subject ?

**A.** That it is one for which Milton alone was fitted.

**Q.** How has he conducted it ?

**A.** In a manner which shows a stretch of imagination and invention perfectly wonderful.

**Q.** How has he supported his characters ?

**A.** With great propriety. Satan is the best drawn of any in the poem.

**Q.** What is Milton's great and distinguishing excellence ?

**A.** Sublimity.

**Q.** How does Milton's sublimity compare with Homer's ?

**A.** It possesses more of a calm and amazing grandeur.

**Q.** What merit have his language and versification ?

**A.** High. His style is full of majesty, and wonderfully adapted to his subject.

**Q.** What are the faults of Milton ?

**A.** He is too theological and metaphysical ; sometimes harsh in his language, and often ostentatious in his learning.

**Q.** To what are his faults to be attributed ?

**A.** To the pedantry of the age in which he lived.

**Q.** Where does this poem place its author ?

**A.** In the first rank of poets.

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## DRAMATIC POETRY—TRAGEDY.

**Q.** How is Dramatic Poetry divided ?

**A.** Into Tragedy and Comedy.

**Q.** How do these differ ?

**A.** Tragedy rests upon the high passions, the virtues, crimes, and sufferings of mankind. Comedy, on their humours, follies, and pleasures. Terror and pity are the instruments of the former ; ridicule of the latter.

**Q.** How does Tragedy differ from the epic poem ?

**A.** In Tragedy, the poet disappears, and the personages themselves are set before us, acting and speaking what is suitable to their own characters.

**Q.** Is this kind of writing difficult ?

**A.** Very. It affords the greatest trial of an author's knowledge of the human heart.

**Q.** What is the great end of Tragedy ?

**A.** To improve our virtuous sensibility.

**Q.** In order to this, what is requisite ?

**A.** That the subject be some moving and interesting story, and that it be conducted in a natural and probable manner.

**Q.** From whom are our dramatic entertainments derived ?

**A.** The Greeks.

**Q.** Who first introduced them ?

**A.** Thespis, who lived 536 years before Christ.

**Q.** Who is properly the father of Tragedy ?

**A.** Æschylus, who came fifty years after Thespis.

**Q.** Who gave the drama a regular form, and brought it to perfection ?

**A.** Sophocles and Euripides.

**Q.** What are essential to the proper conduct of the dramatic fable ?

**A.** The three unities of action, place, and time.

**Q.** In what consists unity of action ?

**A.** In a relation which all the incidents introduced bear to some design or effect, so as to combine naturally into one whole.

**Q.** What does unity of place require ?

**A.** That the action of the play be con-

tinued to the end, in the same place where it is supposed to begin.

**Q.** What, unity of time ?

**A.** That the time of the action be no longer than the time allowed for the representation of the play.

**Q.** How are plays ordinarily divided ?

**A.** Into five acts, which are subdivided into scenes.\*

**Q.** Why does Tragedy, which excites emotions of sorrow, afford gratification to the mind ?

**A.** Because, by the constitution of our nature, the exercise of all the social passions is attended with pleasure.

**Q.** What should the principal characters in the drama be ?

**A.** Moral ; without particular regard to their rank in life.

**Q.** What should be the sentiments which are uttered ?

**A.** Such as would naturally come from the persons speaking.

**Q.** What place should moral sentiments and reflections have ?

**A.** A prominent place, but should not recur too often.

**Q.** What should be the style and versification of Tragedy ?

\* Neve minor, neu sit quinto production actu  
Fabula.——

DE ARTE POET.

If you would have your play deserve success,  
Give it five acts complete, nor more nor less.

FRANCIS.

**A. Free, easy, and varied.**

**Q. Is our blank verse happily suited to this purpose ?**

**A. Yes.** It has sufficient majesty for raising the style ; it can descend to the simple and familiar ; it is free from the constraint and monotony of rhyme.

**Q. What is one of the greatest misfortunes of the French Tragedy ?**

**A. That it is always written in rhyme.**

**Q. What were some of the characteristics of the Greek Tragedy ?**

**A. The plot was taken from ancient stories, and was simple. It admitted of few incidents. Exact regard was paid to the unities of action, time, and place. Love was never admitted. Machinery was employed. The sentiments were moral ; and but slight addresses were made to the passions.**

**Q. Who were the most masterly of the Greek tragedians ?**

**A. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Sophocles excelled. They are elegant and beautiful in their style ; just in their thoughts ; and speak with the voice of nature.**

**Q. Were dramatic entertainments favourite spectacles of the Greeks and Romans ?**

**A. Very.** The magnificence of their theatres far exceeded any thing in modern ages.

**Q. Where did the actors perform ?**

**A. In the open air, surrounded by immense crowds of people.**

**Q. How were they heard ?**

**A. They wore masques, the mouths of**



which were like a trumpet and increased the sound of the voice.

Q. Who are the principal French dramatic writers ?

A. Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire.

Q. What is their character ?

A. They have improved much upon the ancients, whom they have imitated ; but there is a want of fervour, strength, and the natural language of passion in them.

Q. What is the character of the Musical dramas of Metastasio ?

A. They are eminent for elegance of style, the charms of lyric poetry, and the beauties of sentiment. They considerably resemble the ancient Greek Tragedies.

Q. How does the English Tragedy differ from the French ?

A. It is more animated and passionate, but more irregular and incorrect ; and less attentive to decorum and elegance.

Q. Who is the great father of the English drama ?

A. Shakespeare.

Q. What are his two chief virtues ?

A. His lively and diversified paintings of characters, and his strong and natural expressions of passion.

Q. What are some of his defects ?

A. Extreme irregularities in conduct ; grotesque mixtures of serious and comic ; unnatural thoughts and harsh expressions.

Q. What are thought his two master-pieces ?

A. Othello and Macbeth.

**Q.** Who have written since Shakespeare ?

**A.** Dryden, Lee, Otway, Rowe, Young, Thomson.

**Q.** How do the ancient and modern tragedies compare ?

**A.** The ancients were more natural and simple ; the moderns more artful and complex.

**Q.** How the French and English ?

**A.** In the French there is more correctness ; in the English, more fire.

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## COMEDY.

**Q.** What is Comedy ?

**A.** A satirical exhibition of the improprieties and follies of mankind.

**Q.** How may Comedy be divided ?

**A.** Into comedy of character, and comedy of intrigue.

**Q.** How do these differ ?

**A.** In the former, the display of some peculiar character is chiefly aimed at ; in the latter, the action of the play is made the principal object.

**Q.** What should be the style of Comedy ?

**A.** Pure, elegant, and lively, seldom rising higher than the ordinary tone of polite conversation.

**Q.** Which is the most ancient, Tragedy or Comedy ?

**A.** Tragedy.

**Q.** In what did ancient Comedy consist ?

**A.** In direct and avowed satire against par-

ticular known persons, and was a powerful political engine.

Q. Who are the principal writers of Comedy among the ancients ?

A. Aristophanes, Menander, Terence and Plautus.

Q. What are the characteristics of Aristophanes ?

A. Vivacity, satire, and buffoonery. His plays show what a turbulent and licentious republic Athens was ; a republic in which the best men might be publicly exposed to ridicule.

Q. What change did Menander effect ?

A. He reformed, in a high degree, the public taste ; and set the modes of correct, elegant, and moral comedy.

Q. What modern nation has been remarkably fertile in dramatic productions ?

A. The Spanish.

Q. Who are their chief comedians ?

A. Lopez de Vega, who wrote above a thousand plays ; Guillin and Calderon.

Q. Who are the principal writers of comedy in the French nation ?

A. Regnard, Marivaux, Moliere.

Q. Who, in the English ?

A. Shakespeare, Ben Johnson, Dryden, Cibber, Vanburgh, Congreve.

Q. What is the general character of the French comic theatre ?

A. Correct, chaste, and decent.

Q. What, of the English ?

A. Exceedingly licentious ; and very destructive to the morals of the English nation.

*With a view of applying the foregoing rules, the scholar should bestow particular attention upon the following "Critical Examination of the Style of Mr. Addison, in No. 411 of the Spectator."*

"Our sight is the most perfect, and most delightful of all our senses."

This is an excellent introductory sentence. It is clear, precise, and simple. In this manner, we should always set out. A first sentence should seldom be a long, and never an intricate one. He proceeds :

"It fills the mind with the largest variety of ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues the longest in action, without being tired or satiated with its proper enjoyments."

This sentence deserves attention, as remarkably harmonious, and well constructed. It possesses, indeed, almost all the properties of a perfect sentence. It is entirely perspicuous. It is loaded with no superfluous or unnecessary words.

Observe, too, the music of the period ; consisting of three members, each of which, agreeably to a rule I formerly mentioned, grows and rises above the other in sound, till the sentence is conducted, at last, to one of the most melodious closes which our language

• admits, *without being tired or satiated with its proper enjoyments.*

This sentence has still another beauty. It is figurative, without being too much so for the subject.

“ The sense of feeling can, indeed, give us a notion of extension, shape, and all other ideas that enter at the eye, except colours ; but, at the same time, it is very much straitened and confined in its operations, to the number, bulk, and distance of its particular objects.”

This sentence is by no means so happy as the former. It is, indeed, neither clear nor elegant. The meaning would have been much more clear, if the author had expressed himself thus : “ the sense the feeling can, indeed, give us the idea of extension, figure, and all the other properties of matter which are perceived by the eye, except colours.”

The latter part of the sentence is still more embarrassed. The turn of expression is so inaccurate here, that one would be apt to suspect two words to have been omitted in the printing, which were originally in Mr. Addison's manuscript ; because the insertion would render the sense much more intelligible and clear. These two words are, *with regard* :— *it is very much straitened, and confined in its operations, with regard to the number, bulk, and distance of its particular objects.*

The epithet *particular*, applied to *objects* in the conclusion of the sentence, is redundant,

and conveys no meaning whatever. It was sufficient to have said simply, *its objects*.

“ Our sight seems designed to supply all these defects, and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of touch, that spreads itself over an infinite multitude of bodies, comprehends the largest figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote parts of the universe.”

Here again the author's style returns upon us in all its beauty. This is a sentence distinct, graceful, well arranged, and highly musical.

“ It is this sense which furnishes the imagination with its ideas ; so that by the pleasures of the imagination or fancy, (which I shall use promiscuously,) I here mean such as arise from visible objects, either when we have them actually in our view ; or when we call up their ideas into our minds by paintings, statues, descriptions, or any the like occasion.”

The parenthesis in the middle of the sentence, *which I shall use promiscuously*, is not clear. He ought to have said, *terms which I shall use promiscuously* ; as the verb *use* relates not to pleasures of the imagination, but to the terms of fancy and imagination, which he was to employ as synonymous. *Any the like occasion*. To call a painting or a statue *an occasion*, is not a happy expression, nor is it very proper to speak of *calling up ideas by*

*occasions.* The common phrase, *any such means*, would have been more natural.

“ We cannot indeed have a single image in the fancy, that did not make its first entrance through the sight ; but we have the power of retaining, altering, and compounding those images which we have once received, into all the varieties of picture and vision that are most agreeable to the imagination ; for, by this faculty, a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landscapes more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole compass of nature.”

It may be of use to remark, that in one member of this sentence there is an inaccuracy in syntax. The construction might easily have been rectified, by disjoining the participle *retaining* from the other two participles in this way : “ We have the power of retaining those images which we have once received ; and of forming them into all the varieties of picture and vision.” The latter part of the sentence is clear and elegant.

“ There are words in the English language which are employed in a more loose and un-circumscribed sense than those of the fancy and the imagination.”

*There are few words—which are employed.*

It had been better, if our author here had said more simply, *few words in the English language are employed. Those of the fancy and the imagination.* The article ought to have been omitted here. Better, if the sen-

tence had run thus : “ Few words in the English language are employed in a more loose and uncircumscribed sense, than fancy and imagination.”

“ I therefore thought it necessary to fix and determine the notion of these two words, as I intend to make use of them in the thread of my following speculations, that the reader may conceive rightly what is the subject which I proceed upon.”

Though *fix* and *determine* may appear synonymous words, yet a difference between them may be remarked, and they may be viewed, as applied here, with peculiar delicacy. We *fix* what is *loose* ; and we *determine* what is *uncircumscribed*. These two words, therefore, have grace and beauty as they are here applied.

A sort of metaphor is improperly mixed with words in the literal sense. He might very well have said, *as I intend to make use of them in my following speculations*. This was plain language ; but if he chose to borrow an allusion from *thread*, that allusion ought to have been supported ; for there is no consistency in *making use of them in the thread of speculations*.

“ I must therefore desire him to remember, that, by the pleasures of the imagination, I mean only such pleasures as arise originally from sight, and that I divide these pleasures into two kinds.”

As the last sentence began with, *I therefore*



*thought it necessary to fix, it is careless to begin this sentence in a manner so very similar, I must therefore desire him to remember.* The style becomes more clear and neat, when the words are arranged thus : “ By the pleasures of the imagination, I mean such pleasures only as arise from sight.”

“ My design being, first of all, to discourse of those primary pleasures of the imagination, which entirely proceed from such objects as are before our eyes ; and, in the next place, to speak of those secondary pleasures of the imagination, which flow from the ideas of visible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories, or formed into agreeable visions of things, that are either absent or fictitious.”

It is a great rule in laying down the division of a subject, to study neatness and brevity as much as possible. Several words might have been spared here : and the style made more neat and compact.

“ The pleasures of the imagination, taken in their full extent, are not so gross as those of sense, nor so refined as those of the understanding.”

This sentence is distinct and elegant.

“ The last are indeed more preferable, because they are founded on some new knowledge or improvement in the mind of man : yet it must be confessed, that those of the imagination are as great and as transporting as the other.”

In the beginning of this sentence, the phrase *more preferable*, is such a plain inaccuracy, that one wonders how Mr. Addison should have fallen into it; seeing *preferable*, of itself, expresses the comparative degree, and is the same with *more eligible*, or *more excellent*.

I must observe further, that the proposition contained in the last member of this sentence, is neither clear, nor neatly expressed. The proposition, reduced to perspicuous language, runs thus: "Yet it must be confessed, that the pleasures of the imagination, when compared with those of the understanding, are no less great and transporting."

"A beautiful prospect delights the soul as much as a demonstration; and a description in Homer has charmed more readers than a chapter in Aristotle."

This is a good illustration of what he had been asserting, and is expressed with that happy and elegant turn for which our author is very remarkable.

"Besides, the pleasures of the imagination have this advantage above those of the understanding, that they are more obvious, and more easy to be acquired."

This is also an unexceptionable sentence.

"It is but opening the eye, and the scene enters."

This sentence is lively and picturesque. I must remark, however, a small inaccuracy. A scene cannot be said to *enter*; an actor enters; but a scene *appears*, or *presents itself*.

“ The colours paint themselves on the fancy, with very little attention of thought or application of mind in the beholder.”

This is still a beautiful illustration.

“ We are struck, we know not how, with the symmetry of any thing we see, and immediately assent to the beauty of an object, without inquiring into the particular causes and occasions of it.”

There is a falling off here from the elegance of the former sentences. We *assent* to the truth of a proposition ; but cannot so well be said to *assent to the beauty of an object*. It would have been some amendment to the style to have run thus : “ We immediately acknowledge the beauty of an object, without inquiring into the cause of that beauty.”

“ A man of a polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures that the vulgar are not capable of receiving.”

*Polite* is a term more commonly applied to manners or behaviour, than to the mind or imagination.

“ He can converse with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a statue. He meets with a secret refreshment in a description ; and often feels a greater satisfaction in the prospect of fields and meadows, than another does in the possession. It gives him, indeed, a kind of property in every thing he sees ; and makes the most rude, uncultivated parts of nature administer to his pleasures : so that he looks upon the world, as it were, in another

light, and discovers in it a multitude of charms that conceal themselves from the generality of mankind."

All this is very beautiful. The illustration is happy ; and the style runs with the greatest ease and harmony. We see no labour, no stiffness, or affectation ; but an author writing from the native flow of a gay and pleasing imagination.

" There are, indeed, but very few who know how to be idle and innocent, or have a relish of any pleasures that are not criminal ; every diversion they take, is at the expense of some one virtue or another, and their very first step out of business, is into vice or folly."

Nothing can be more elegant, or more finely turned, than this sentence. It is neat, clear, and musical.

" A man should endeavour, therefore, to make the sphere of his innocent pleasures as wide as possible, that he may retire into them with safety, and find in them such a satisfaction as a wise man would not blush to take."

This is also a good sentence, and gives occasion to no material remark.

" Of this nature are those of the imagination which do not require such a bent of thought as is necessary to our more serious employments, nor, at the same time, suffer the mind to sink into that indolence and remissness, which are apt to accompany our more sensual delights ; but, like a gentle exercise to the faculties, awaken them from sloth and idle-

ness, without putting them upon any labour or difficulty."

The beginning of this sentence is not correct, and affords an instance of a period too loosely connected with the preceding one. *Of this nature*, says he, *are those of the imagination*. We might ask, of what nature? It had been better, if, keeping in view the governing object of the preceding sentence, he had said, "This advantage we gain," or, "This satisfaction we enjoy, by means of the pleasure of the imagination."

"We might here add, that the pleasures of the fancy are more conducive to health than those of the understanding, which are worked out by dint of thinking, and attended with too violent a labour of the brain."

On this sentence, nothing occurs deserving of remark, except that *worked out by dint of thinking*, is a phrase which borders too much on vulgar and colloquial language, to be proper for being employed in a polished composition.

"Delightful scenes, whether in nature, painting, or poetry, have a kindly influence on the body, as well as the mind, and not only serve to clear and brighten the imagination, but are able to disperse grief and melancholy, and to set the animal spirits in pleasing and agreeable motions. For this reason, Sir Francis Bacon, in his Essay upon Health, has not thought it improper to prescribe to his reader a poem, or a prospect, where he particular-

ly dissuades him from knotty and subtile disquisitions, and advises him to pursue studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature."

In the latter of these two sentences, a member of the period is altogether out of its place ; which gives the whole sentence a harsh and disjointed cast, and serves to illustrate the rules I formerly gave concerning arrangement. The wrong placed member which I point at, is this ; *where he particularly dissuades him from knotty and subtile disquisitions* ; these words should, undoubtedly, have been placed, not where they stand, but thus : *Sir Francis Bacon, in his Essay upon Health, where he particularly dissuades him from knotty and subtile disquisitions, has not thought it improper to prescribe to him, &c.* This arrangement reduces every thing into proper order.

" I have, in this paper, by way of introduction, settled the notion of those pleasures of the imagination, which are the subject of my present undertaking, and endeavoured, by several considerations, to recommend to my readers the pursuit of those pleasures ; I shall, in my next paper, examine the several sources from whence these pleasures are derived."

These two concluding sentences afford examples of the proper collocation of circumstances in a period. I formerly showed, that it is often a matter of difficulty to dispose of them in such a manner, as that they shall not

embarrass the principal subject of the sentence. In the sentences before us, several of these incidental circumstances necessarily come in—*By way of introduction—by several considerations—in this paper—in the next paper.* All which are, with great propriety, managed by our author.

FINIS.













